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THE
GLORY of CHRIST
VINDICATED;

IN THE
Excellency of his PERSON, RIGHTEOUSNESS,
LOVE, and POWER :

BEING
An Explication of the Mystery which was kept
Secret since the World began.

Wherein the Doctrine of the HOLY TRINITY is
manifest in the Glory-Man, the LORD JESUS, and that bearing
the Filth of Sin, in his Sufferings, was Part of the Atonement he
made to God for the Elect.

It is likewise demonstrated,

That an Interest in CHRIST is founded alone upon
the free, absolute Love of the FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT :

PROVING

That their free Grace-Union, according to God's
Ancient Settlements of their Supreme Relation to CHRIST, was
never destroyed by their Natural Relation and Fall in *Adam*.

To which is added,

The Spiritual Operations of the HOLY GHOST,
as the immediate Spring, Life, and Source of all Practical Reli-
gion.

The Whole containing,

A concise, and comprehensive Answer, to a Book
entitled, *The Saint's Treasury*; Or, CHRIST
the most Excellent.

Wrote Originally by JOSEPH HUSSEY, *Minister of the Gospel*
of CHRIST, at Cambridge, and now faithfully abridged.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. FULLER, in *Newgate-Street*, and T. LUCKMAN, in
Coventry. MDCCCLXI.

®

THE

GLORY OF CHRIST

BY J. H. B. D. A. T. E. D. A.

Author of "The Glory of Christ"

London: The Author, 1841.

Printed by J. H. B. D. A. T. E. D. A.

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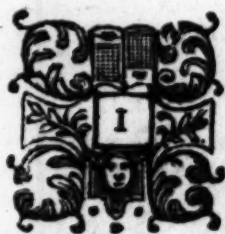
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THE
EDITORS to the READER.



N the First Edition of the Abridgment of this Work, some material Errors passed, particularly in the Note at the Bottom of Page 6. which in this Second Edition, we have endeavoured to correct.

The following Treatise is an Abridgment of a Book, entitled, *The Glory of Christ vindicated*, wrote by Mr. *Hussey*; upon his reading a Piece published by Mr. *Hunt*, called, *The Saints Treasure*. Mr. *Hussey*, in his Introduction says, “ When a short Treatise of Brother *Hunt*’s was brought to my Hand, I found it entitled the *Saint’s Treasure*; I read it over, and thought he had made some Improvements in Soul Experience, and Doctrinal Knowledge; but on examining the Treatise, three or four Times, I found, that upon the true Foundation, he had built Wood, Hay, and Stubble, and jumbled base Stuff

Stuff, among precious Truths." We being willing, in some Measure, to sift the Chaff from the Wheat, separate the Precious from the Vile, have endeavoured by the following Abridgment and Remarks to take off the Vail of Darkness and Ignorance, which hid the Glory of CHRIST the most Excellent.

EDITORS TO THE READER

In the First Edition of the Abridgment of the Work, some material Errors passed, particularly in the



The following is an Abridgment of a Book, entitled, "The Christian's Duty," written by Mr. H. upon his reading a Piece published by Mr. H. called, "The Christian's Duty." Mr. H. in his Introduction says, "When a short Treatise of Brother H. was brought to my Hand, I found it entitled the Christian's Duty; I read it over, and thought he had made some Improvements in Soul Repentance, and Doctrinal Knowledge; but on examining the Treatise, three or four Times, I found that upon the true Foundation, he had built Wood, Hay, and stubble, and jumbled bag



C H A P. I.

I shall now defend and vindicate the Glories :

1. *Of the Person of Christ.*
2. *Of the Love of Christ.*
3. *Of the Sufferings of Christ.*
4. *Of the Righteousness of Christ.*
5. *Of the Blood and redeeming Efficacy.*
6. *Of the Worth of Christ.*
7. *Of the Possessions of Christ.*

FIRST, Mr. *Hunt* says, " That the divine nature of Christ is shadowed out unto us, by the Metaphor of the Rose, Christ," mentioned, *Cant. ii. 1. I am the Rose of Sharon.* In answer, I would observe, First, that the divine nature of Christ is God, a substantial person in the Godhead ; and can God, who is an immaterial substance, be shadowed out by a rose, or any material resemblance ? It is a dark conception of the divine nature, to shadow out God, who is an infinite being.

Second, It is only as God is known, and related to us in Christ, that he shadows out himself unto us ; it is in Christ, by reason of Christ being in our nature, and of God's promise, of old, to send Christ in the flesh to us in our nature : Indeed God is said, in scripture, to have a face, eyes, hands, and bowels, &c. not that, when God speaks of himself, by these and other human parts, they are really the divine nature, as the Anthropomorphites fancied, but they are the declaration of the human nature of Christ as it stands in union with God ; mouth, arms, and soul, face, eyes, and hands, are
not

not to be ascribed to the divine nature, as Mr. *Hunt* does in page 74, calling them "his comely parts;" but to our nature, as it stands in union with God; nor is it merely spoken, as some would observe, that it is God condescending to our capacities, but it is Christ manifesting himself to us, as God's messenger, as the Father's servant, as the son of man.

Third, The metaphor, *I am the Rose of Sharon*, can be spoken of no person in God, abstractly, but of Christ as the son of man, or as Christ the anointed of God; as the word Christ signifies the unction of the Holy Ghost. When Christ received the Spirit, without measure, it fell upon Jesus of Nazareth, the human nature alone being the subject of receiving the Holy Ghost; for I know of no metaphor, or shadow, that God is set out unto us by in scripture, to shadow out the divine nature, or his infinite perfections; but to shadow out his grace to us in the flesh of Jesus; for without the veil of Christ's flesh, our God is a consuming fire; we can hold no communion with God's essence and perfections, but as it is revealed in Christ; and therefore, it is the Holy Ghost leads us to him, as Mediator, by shadows and metaphors, which points him out as man: Some shadows, or glasses, represent him more to us than others, as there is more in him, to us, as he is a bridegroom, a husband, than as he is a shepherd, or a shield. All his works of nature, grace, and glory, being settled in subserviency to his praise, under this settlement of Christ, from everlasting, as the head of the church, *Prov. viii. 23, 24.* to be made manifest in time. Then he ordained us men, and presented a number of them to his Son (* set up the Man wisdom) then ordained their creation, under one common head of a promiscuous multitude, children and strangers, yet both without sin; then ordained the fall of every one of them under their common head of nature; then ordained the restoration of the children by this Elder Brother, and passed by all the strangers, or such whom he never appointed to acquaintance with these things. Thus one thing fall in upon another in this manner from everlasting, which though we cannot take in without a succession in our thoughts, yet they all lay together, in the most perfect order in the divine mind; we behold them successively, but God saw them all at once. † 'Tis not then from everlasting, just in the same sense as the filiation of the Son of God, or his

* Christ, under the character of wisdom, mentioned in *Prov. viii. 23.* where Christ says, I was set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was, as the head and husband of his people; not as to his divine nature, for that cannot be set up, being uncreated, ungenerated; therefore it is ignorant to ascribe it to his divine nature.

† Here we must beg leave to differ from Mr. *Hussey*: Is it not from that everlasting, as the filiation of the Son of God, or his being God's only Son? What is not? What not God's thoughts of love, his counsel of peace, his covenant of grace, his decree of salvation, from the same everlasting as the filiation of the Son of God? What is there two everlastings, one for the filiation of the Son of God, and one for his counsell, covenanting

his being God's only Son from everlasting, *Psal. xc. 2.* But from that everlasting, where God's ways and works then began, as Christ was the beginning of God's ways before his open works; therefore it is Christ as in the flesh, even whilst now in glory; he being entered with our nature into Heaven, who is made of God unto us wisdom, in the beautiful *Rose of Sharon*; 'tis Christ as Mediator, that is the Tree of Life, to eat and live for ever, in the new approaching Eden; I mean the glorious new Jerusalem, not to be enjoyed in Heaven, but coming down from God out of Heaven; and this same Tree of Life, in the midst of the street of it, the fruit of which is to be glory and life, as now it is grace and life, by the second Adam, the Saviour; and this in opposition to the fruit of that tree, in the midst of the garden of the other Paradise, belonging to the first Adam, or the first man of open propagation, which fruit was sin, shame, and death. The shadows

and purposes? Or, was there two duties in the same everlasting, one for his Son, and one for his counsels? One or other is must be, we will try them both. First, to talk of two everlastings before time, is the same as to say a first and second eternity, which is a solecism, an incongruity, and a first and second date in eternity is as incongruous; for it supposes a succession of new thoughts; to arise in Jehovah's mind; first, the generation of his Son, or the eternal filiation of Christ, (as some call it) then the thoughts of his love to his people, &c. Which succession of thoughts is impossible to his nature; the thought of which is very destructive to his being: For nothing new can arise before his omniscient eye. *Psal. xc. 2.* From everlasting to everlasting thou art God. Though Mr. Hulsey brings this text to prove the filiation of the Son of God, which is only spoken of the nature, essence, and perfections of Jehovah, being from everlasting to everlasting: But if Mr. Hulsey, and many others, mean, by the filiation of Christ, his divine nature, being begotten, we must beg leave to tell them, that Christ's deity must be better maintained from the scriptures of truth, or otherwise they must give leave to the Arians and Socinians to triumph, which we are not willing to do; and therefore boldly assert, (and let them contradict it as will, we are ready to defend it) that Christ, as to his divine nature, is uncreated, or otherwise he could not necessarily exist of himself; and if he did not necessarily exist of himself, as to his divine nature, he cannot be God over all, blessed for evermore. But the Apostle says he is, *Rom. ix. 5.* therefore we take leave, from divine authority, to assert, that the Lord Jesus, as to his divine nature, is unbegotten, uncommunicable, self-existent, independent, co-essential with the Father; and that there is no one text in the book of God that speaks of him under the character of the Son of God, but it has a respect to his office, as Mediator, and not to his original, divine, and essential nature, as Jehovah, and coeval with the Father. But the reader may expect a larger entertainment upon this subject, when we come to treat of Christ's glories, as Jehovah by nature. But then, how are we to conceive of the love of God? I answer, as a perfection of the divine nature, *1 John iv. 16.* God is love. His love arises from his essence, and is coetaneous with his nature; therefore there can be no date fixed unto it, but what is proper to his own existence: For when Jehovah fixed the date of his love unto his church and people, he takes it from his own existence, I have, says he, loved thee with an everlasting love, *Jer. xxxi. 3.* and says the Psalmist, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God, *Psal. xc. 2.* His love is his nature, loving his people. But then, Secondly, We must observe, that this love abode, rested, and dwelt in his eternal mind, until it was his pleasure to break it forth and make it manifest. *Ephes. i. 9.* Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself. Thirdly, We must likewise observe, that though his nature is love, yet the fixation and bestowment of this love, is an act of sovereignty, whether it be to men or angels; though it flows from his nature, yet it is fixed and settled upon them according to his sovereign counsels and divine transactions. *Eph. i. 11.*

shadows belong to Christ, as all metaphors whereby he is shadowed out to us, as he is the word that was made flesh, *John i. 14.* and it is as such, that still he is as the apple tree among the trees of the wood ; it is alone, as he is in the flesh, that he can be shadowed out unto us ; so that before the time of the promise drew nigh, as the Old Testament Saints had not received him in the flesh, nor otherwise seen him, yet by faith beheld him to come in the flesh ; therefore the church could testify of him, under the shadow of the tree, *and a righteous branch to be raised up to David ; I sat down under his shadow with great delight,* as if she had said, I find all good coming into my soul by this free gift, this gift of God to me, as given me in my nature, for as such, *he is the shadow of a great rock in a weary land,* in whom we enjoy God, and are not scorched by the flames of divine holiness.

By the metaphor, of the *Rose of Sharon*, the Holy Ghost sets forth Christ's glorified state in Heaven, the text looks to the man Jesus, as glorified, though he was once on earth found in fashion as a man, and having the common properties of a man, yet here he is set out as glorified. The Old Testament, speaking of things to come, as done, according to ancient settlements between God and Christ, though yet to come between Christ and the Church ; he is not set forth in these words, *I am the Rose of Sharon*, as humbled, but as the humanity now absolutely subsists in the open glory of the Divinity, and the human nature is perfectly filled with all the glory due to his personal glory in Heaven, and is here described as such. Oh ! what a sight will it be to be with him ! to behold him where he is ! not as a man of sorrows, but in his abstract glory, as the metaphor in the text points out ; in the latter part of it, he says, *I am the Lilly of the valley* ; wherein he takes notice, how he once sprung on the earth, in his abasement ; and indeed, his glory was first in God's eye before his humiliation, and therefore is first placed before it. So that in this description of him, *I am the Rose of Sharon*, the Holy Ghost hath admirably fitted it on purpose, to cut off all considerations of him on earth, but what are every way worthy of him in Heaven ; This text hath to do with the Lord Christ under the glorious kingly shadow of his spreading favours to his Saints, neither doth a stranger intermeddle with this joy ; though this *Sharon's Rose*, be gotten into bloom, it is a secret between the bridegroom and the bride ; therefore he says, *all things that I have heard of my Father, have I made known, unto you,* *Joh. xv. 15.* It is the Saints that see their all in Christ, their own beauty, holiness, and enjoyment, before it reached them ; and this, while the greatest part of men, now at this day, see more delight in language, more beauty in wit, more colour in gold, and are more taken with carnal honours, than they are with Christ. Though Mr. *Hunt* observes, " that some men dislike roses," yet where do we find a part of the world set against the beauty of roses, as they are against the

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the beauty of *Christ*; for the more *Christ* shineth forth in any one truth, in any one person, in any ministry; or if he doth not shine forth in all truths, in all the saints, in all the ministry alike; is he not more or less delighted as to each of these for the sake of this? Doth not light (for instance) of *Christ*, which is the preaching of the gospel, discover that doing the will of the Father, is believing on him whom the Father has sent; he having all power given him of the Father to appoint and command it, which set the bold *Neonomians* to corrupt the faith of the gospel, and the practical *Antinomians* to trample upon the order of the gospel, as one cannot bear the light of the gospel, nor the other cannot bear the heat of the gospel in the government of *Christ*. *Of the increase of whose government there shall be no end, Isa. ix. 7.* I will tell any man plainly that it is the gospel in the splendor and glory of it, that splendor which few professors can endure, but brand it with *Antinomianism*, &c. I say, it was this gospel which drew me with cords of love, into the strictest order of fellowship in breaking of bread, and in prayer, *Acts ii. 42.* Interest in the privileges of the gospel, I mean absolute pardon of sin, holiness of nature from *Christ*, peace of conscience, joy in the *Holy Ghost*; I say, before an experimental acquaintance with these enjoyments, I was a great hater of the saints of God, of the churches of *Christ*, and yet a preacher; and so it had been in my soul unto this day, both against the government of *Christ*, his yoke, and all obedience to him, if the Lord had not preached down all such preachers as misled me! and that by bringing his mighty grace into my soul, and turning all their ways and schemes, for doing the will of God, quite out of doors; that, blessed be *Jehovah* for ever, I am now alive to *Christ*, and dead to their way of doings: and I am verily perswaded, there are thousands of saints, in this nation, that can by grace experience this; for *Christ* is received by faith, as many as received him, *John i. 12.* by faith *Christ* is laid hold of, as the hope for before us, *Heb. vi. 18.* his strength is laid hold of *Isa. xxvii. 5.* by faith *Christ* is apprehended, after *Christ* hath first apprehended the soul, and took hold of us, as vessels of mercy, before prepared unto glory, *Rom. ix. 23.* *Phil. iii. 12.* I follow after, if that I may apprehend, for that which I am also apprehended in *Christ Jesus*; all these things, that faith is created in the soul for, are true; for faith is wrought of the operation of God, *Col. ii. 12.* and the soul receives *Christ*, lays hold of him in his strength, as our rock and anchor-hold: For to say any thing of *Christ*, which the rule of faith will not warrant me, would be a disgrace to his glorious name. But the scriptures nowhere warrant me to say, that the Lord *Christ* is a rose that may be gathered; for, to say so, is a blemish upon his glory, for to gather him is inconsistent with glorifying him as we ought: Take his person, as represented, as the Rose of Sharon, and he is advanced to the full bloom, he is displayed in the highest perfection due to the Mediator: For a rose in full bloom is ripened into the highest perfection of its kind. This, now applied to *Christ*, points us to him in that amplitude of glory in which the church shall behold him as he is, when he shall appear, and the

Saints shall be like him, and see him as he is. For the *Holy Ghost* setting forth *Christ* as the Rose of Sharon, doth not represent him as he is preached in the gospel to sinners, but as he preached in the gospel to his own saints, that have obtained by believing the fore-view of him thro' a glass darkly; and to set them more a longing after his appearing in his open glory, when he shall be beheld face to face; and through the saints conformity to him, in the *resurrection of the just*, shall be admired in all them that believe; when he will lay it out before the world, what right, though short conceptions of the glory of his person, in opposition to all world glory, he had been giving to his saints by the *Holy Ghost* in this life. And what right, though short conceptions of their own raised glorious bodies, in conformity to *Christ's* most glorious body, they once had in believing when here in a poor state on earth. This I take to be much the meaning of that phrase, in 2 *Thes.* i. 10. *When he shall come to be admired in all them that believe.* Oh! what glorious dreams are these to the world! and yet I know that with mine eyes I shall behold him in his glorious kingdom. Thus it is, as he is risen, and his blossom shall never fade, that this glorious Rose has conversation with the Lilly of the valley, mentioned in the next verse, even now while he is preparing her with his righteousness, as his love among the daughters, singling her out for the everlasting embraces of her God: The *Song of Solomon* in general, and this expression in particular, *I am the Rose of Sharon*, is between *Christ* and the spouse, not between *Christ* and unconverted sinners. Again, this person in glory, is capable of being enjoyed in communion, and even experienced in his spiritual kingdom with the utmost delight; but the notion of gathering him, as we do a rose, doth not carry that reverence and due regard to *Christ* in it as we ought to have. The gathering a rose is separating it from the stem upon which it grew, but *Christ* in our nature can be no ways separated from God, he is capable of being enjoyed, as he is, but it is by a suitable enjoyment that must not alter nor remove him; for to separate his humanity in our thoughts from his Godhead, is to disworship him as Mediator, who is, as Mediator, the Rose always flourishing. Indeed it is *Christ's* property, as the Shepherd of the flock, to gather the lambs in his arms, *Isa.* xl. 11. To gather the lillies, *Cam.* vi. 2. but not ours to gather him, as we do a rose, by separating it from the stem, for *Christ* is never to be separated from the stem of *Jesse*, from the root and offspring of *David*.

C H A P.

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C H A P. II.

I shall now attempt to vindicate the Glories of Christ's Love, from some open Disparagements of it.

THE words of Brother *Hunt* are these: "In this song of songs we have an account of the breathing of the spouse after her beloved, and I had almost said, there is no love lost between *Christ* and his Spouse; you will find both striving, as it were, who shall express their love to the highest strains. I grant indeed the saints love to *Christ* is not commensurate, with *Christ's* love to them; yet in some things there is a dark resemblance." In answer to which, I shall more fully exalt the *Lord Jesus Christ* in the matter of his love, as it is superlative and infinitely beyond all strains and strivings in a spouse, and I question not but it will appear so to all the saints, who, by reason of use, as the apostle says, *Heb. v. 14.* have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. As the love of *Christ* is in other parts of the scripture, it will hold to the same in the *Song of Solomon*, transcendantly greater beyond the spouse's love to him, by the following arguments.

Argument first, *Christ* can command his own love to his spouse, *Ps. xlii. 8.* the *Lord* will command his loving kindness in the day-time; and did he not command his loving kindness in the day-time, in making her so many kind visits as is mentioned in this song? To bestow upon her so many costly and endearing tokens of his love? To put so much beauty on her, and then commend her by setting her out from top to toe? What power had he over his love when he would not be overcome by her unkind usage to him? wet his locks with the drops of the night, praying solitary for her on the mountains of deserts, when she was indulging herself in her bed of rest; he pleads, open to me my sister, my spouse; but she denies, and pleads the putting off her coat, how could she put it on? The washing of her feet, how could she defile them? *Cant. v. ii.* And notwithstanding all this disobedience of the spouse by night, yet the *Lord* will command his loving kindness in the day-time, he will be found of her upon the first conviction of her fault, and her early seeking him in the streets; he will overcome the fault, put it up, and put it off with power; he hath power over his own displeasure, and can command his own love, in the out-goings of his heart to her. Whereas on the contrary, the spouse of *Christ* hath no commanding power of her love, but whensoever she acteth graciously, and loves the *Lord Jesus*, it is by constraint of his over-ruling influence, hereby the loveth much, for the love of *Christ* constraineth us, *2 Cor. v. 14.*

But what comparison can be made between commanding love and constraining love, the church loves *Christ*, by dependance, but *Christ's* love to the church is supreme, superlative, and surpassing all other love.

Argument second. *Christ* can secure, establish, and lengthen out his own love to his spouse, through the vehement and superlative affection he beareth to her, *John xiii. 1. Having loved his own, that were in the world, he loveth to the end.* Whereas she (the spouse of *Christ*) cannot secure or establish her own love to him, but relies on her Maker's pleasure, who is her husband for it, *John xv. 9. continue ye in my love.* Your duty is continuance in my love, but your strength must be my spirit for it, as appears *John xv. 6. without me ye can do nothing.* If without *Christ* first discovering his love, the spouse cannot love *Christ*; we may be confident, that the utmost flowings out of her borrowed love, through the books of the *Canticles*, being but the rays and the sun-beam reflections of his own communicated love unto her, ought not to be represented by an almost saying there is no love lost between *Christ* and his spouse; for between that love that secures love, and that love that is secured by it, there is no comparison; for there is but one highest strain of love, and that is on *Christ's* side, it being a contradiction in terms to say two superlative degrees in one matter.

Argument third. *Christ's* love to his spouse is as God's love, *John x. 3. I and my Father are one, one in love as well as one in nature,* therefore *Christ's* love to his spouse rises up to an equal degree of the Father's love to him, *John xv. 9. as the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you;* that is, as the Father hath loved me in the everlasting union, and loved you with an everlasting love, in the everlasting relation unto me, so have I loved you; thus *Christ's* loving the spouse will bear a comparison with God's loving *Christ*, and with God's loving her too in a relation unto him; as the Father hath loved me, as *Christ*, me, as the first image of God, above all his other works; this is a high and a very glorious mystery: I would speak something of it, as I, a poor worm, am able; and what am I able to say of it, any further than led into it by God the Spirit? the Comforter being come into me by him, who is gone unto the Father, and he also, as it hath pleased him to bring me out of darkness into some of this marvellous light.

C H A P. III.

HOW *Christ* stood in the love of the Father from the beginning of his way; why God the Father predestinated his only begotten son into creature-being, that is to say, into a mediator of creature-existence; but how, from everlasting, by mediator is settle

settlement, by constitution, not by fleshly creation, yet, as afterwards to be, the *Man Christ* existed not in his open flesh, but subsisted secretly in the second person of the Godhead, by covenant, and so the mediator was in every thing considered and reputed of the Father as *God-Man*, i. e. mediatorially from everlasting; thus was he made in the image of the invisible *God*, yet not made in open flesh; this is more than purpose or choice to make him, or meer election of him; wisdom, for *Christ*, in his human nature, considered in the character of wisdom, was then set up from everlasting in covenant settlements, in union with the divine, therefore speaks as the wisdom-mediator, as one engaged and concerned in the work of man's salvation, *I was set up*, ver. 23, *I was brought forth*, 24, *I was there*, 27, *I was by him*, *I was daily his delight*, 30. The Apostle calls this wisdom, the image of the invisible *God*, Col. i. 15. *the first-born of every creature*, answerable to *Christ* being set up from everlasting. This is another property of him, still agreeing with him as the image-draught *God* kept of every creature by him, so it well explains how the image of *God* is there to be understood, from the divine nature of *Christ*, in whom that image, or his first-born stands: Thus, with very good reason, I carry all the text and coherence in a direct reference to the mediator, the image of the invisible *God*, or the covenant-wisdom man; thus the Son of *God* in love began his man-union, the whole person, hereupon, by a distinction of natures, in *God's* counsels and covenant, is *God-Man* mystically, the foundation of his becoming openly so in time: This gospel-mystery stood in *God* before other creatures were made by him, when there was no depths wisdom *was brought forth*, *Christ* is therefore still in the same capacity of wisdom, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the ending, Rev. i. 8. he is the first and last of all *God's* thoughts, of the other works of his hands, because they all begin, and they all conclude with him, so he was the wisdom-mediator in all considerations of creatorship before the fall, though not so properly *Christ-Mediator* till under the fore-views of man's fall; the Son of *God* is the wisdom-mediator in the upper-fall way, and is *Christ* mediator as to ways and means in the under-fall way, for no creature, however, could stand without him, and therefore, when it pleased *God* to make a trial, for illustrating the wise and supreme ends of him, *who giveth not account of any of his matters*, that some creatures after their being and draught by him, wisdom-mediator, in the nature part of that office and relation, were lost, because he ordered them to be left upon their creature-bottoms, and given up to their own creature-wisdom; Angels and men they both fell, they could not stand, having nothing to do with settling establishing grace in *Christ*, as the wisdom-mediator, only as many as were ordained by this pattern to stand upon wisdom-grace, they have kept their natural state as elect Angels, or, though fallen in their natural head, as the sons and daughters of men, yet are they recovered by their gracious Husband.

Ah! great love of the Father to *Christ*! How admirable is this advanced in *John* xvii. 24. *thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world*; this cannot be meant of the divine person love one to another,

other, merely as the persons of the one *God* among themselves, because there was such a love to and among the persons in *God*, as was natural to them, therefore, above all stipulation and agreement, to be bestowed on each other, this being the radical due of *God's* nature; neither could he be *God* without it, therefore this is meant in a sense wherein the Father is greater than *Christ*, *John* xiv. 28. and so the *God* of *Christ*, *Eph.* i. 17. according to that place, *1 Cor.* xi. 3. the head of *Christ* is *God*; he is here considered not absolutely as *God*, but relatively as *God-man*, and it was the love of the Father, in the days of eternity, he had unto the man of the unction; mind the great distinction between his essence, as *God*, and his covenant, as the man in *God*; as to what he is in his divine essence, he plainly founds his argument on his divine will, *Father, says he, I will*; but as to what he asks, it is as plain he founds it in his and his Father's covenant, that they, whom the Father had given him, might be with him where he was: *Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am*; where I am now in my man-covenant; to be with me where I am in my man-nature, as certainly as I am there now in my divine essence and divine glory, which can never depart from thence; and that is Heaven, to which his man-nature was going: He pleaded, because the Father had loved him before the foundation of the world.

'Tis evident he prays for the openness of the glory in Heaven; where I am, says he, in my essence as *God*, and where I am by covenant to be as man for ever, *with the glory I had with thee before the world was*, *John* xvii. 5. that glory was the open-glory of the man, as he stood in *God* with the Father. Therefore I call him the glory-man, the man *Christ Jesus*, set up from everlasting; but not from everlasting as the divine essence is, for that is naturally eternal, but *from the beginning of God's ways, before his works of old*, either of creation or the discovery of his causes. Here we will allow Mr. *Huffey* his distinction, "that the man-nature of *Christ* is not of the same date with his divine essence." But his love is as everlasting as his nature; the glory-man was with *God*, subsisted in *God* from everlasting, therefore, says *Christ*, *thou lovest me before the foundation of the world*, *John* xvii. 24. which is spoken of his human nature, as it then subsisted in his divine person, in the view of *God's* mind, and the fixation of his eternal purposes. Thus *Christ* is the way unto the Father from the beginning, whereby we come to know *God*, for all that is in *God* besides *Christ-man*, is without beginning. The Trinity is not to be studied or known, but as we mingle the doctrine of *Christ*, and bring along with us the Wisdom-mediator, as the human nature of *Christ* had a secret way to stand in *God*; and so was the Glory-man from everlasting, between *God* and all his future works; for we cannot give unto *God* creation-honour, if we shut out the Wisdom-mediator, no more than we can give him redemption-honour, if we shut out the same person as the wisdom-lamb of *God*, whom he loved before the foundation of the world with a mediatorial love, it is a making him every way a Mediator, a Mediator of introduction to begin the creatures; a Mediator of confirmation,

to

to uphold them in nature, grace and glory; a Mediator of restoration to the elect of God; a Mediator of triumph and coronation to the church universal at last. " Yet here we may observe Mr. *Hussey* did not mean many mediators, but the displaying his power and grace various ways, under the same character," so that the love of the Father appears to be a constant current of love from everlasting, loving the man *Christ* into a glory-union with the second person in God. For I yet keep in the super-lapsarian (or over-fall) highway of the King eternal, immortal, the invisible and only wife God, in his counsels about *Christ*, above and before *Adam*, yet within the bounds of sobriety and truth.

A few USES of the foregoing CHAPTERS.

First, Then, to begin with God out of *Christ*, is rather Babel-work than Zion's work, as men in all ages, since the Apostle's days, have been guilty of; for if in all things the Lord *Christ* was to have the preheminance, and God did not take a step without him, what a deviation hath been introduced from the pattern, when men have undertaken to go through the knowledge of God without him? Whereas, in the gospel, the knowledge of God, and knowledge of *Jesus Christ* are closely linked together: It hath all along been the pleasing unhappiness of mankind to know and serve God, by a neglect of the Mediator; their converse hath been the Father, Son and Spirit, in essence and attributes, and yet the glory-man, that stood in the love of God the Father from everlasting, never were upon men's thoughts and studies, when they girt themselves for this divine knowledge.

The Doctrine of the Trinity ought not to stand as men have set it, for as they have laid it, it is very remote from the evangelical revelation of God in *Christ*, for as such it is approachable by the believer whilst the man is an hiding place, covering the soul as in the cleft of the rock, whilst this glorious Majesty passed by; for we must not think to range these things in order without the Chief Corner-stone, not to make *Christ* the chink-stone to fill up a common place, for in God's works of nature, grace, and glory, he filleth all in all. If he be the corner stone, why is he not set the first stone of all? Yet *Christ* is never thought of, as *Christ*, till redemption work takes place; *Adam* was made in his Image, after his likeness, as *Christ* was the first born of every creature; and yet we live under the gospel, as if it had been, as *Jeshua* says, on the other side of the flood; but if we are risen with *Christ*, should we not set our affections on things that are above, where *Christ* sitteth at the right hand of God in that glory he had with the Father from everlasting? Thus the minister and the people perish for lack of knowledge. How perish? methinks I hear some say, not eternally, (the leader in *Israel* will certainly prevent that) but perish in their vigour, life and spiritual-mindedness, in their communion and comforts, in their rounds of attendance on Lord's days, and week days performances, they perish in their old stock for want of fresh improvements, and seeing farther into *Christ*, for if we do not grow up in him, we wither, let us be what ministers or churches we will.

USE the SECOND.

You may be sure, that that subject, or sermon will never do us any good that is not founded upon *Christ*; as *Christ* is founded upon *God*, it will give us no distinct knowledge or establishment in the truth, unless it hath something distinctly from *God* our Father, and from the *Lord Jesus*, by the blessed Comforter. The Trinity, as it is known in, by, and through *Christ*, is our life; and what life without communion? and what communion without the knowledge of persons? and what knowledge without the Gospel? The right preaching of the Trinity, in their persons and operations, is the life of the churches; they would die in all their duties, wither in all their hearing, lose the best enjoyment, which is the end of all ordinances, but by these persons, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, spoken of according to a right dividing of the word in every discourse, and all through *Christ*, our people, through grace, live.

USE the THIRD.

For mending the disorders, I have, by grace, chosen the superlapsarian, or over-fall way, in the everlasting love of the Father to the elect in his Son *Christ Jesus*, whom he loved as the mediator between *God* and them before the foundation of the world; I have seen both beauty and antiquity in the wisdom-mediator; his superlapsarian way and constitution in the will and grace of *God*, as the wisdom-mediator, was the foundation of his consequent sublapsarian constitution in the same will, and grace in the redemption-mediator, accordingly, I see my relation to him in the superlapsarian settlement, to be, by the same grace, the foundation of my sublapsarian relation to *God*, to bring my person safely, by his own means, through all the ordered changes of the fall, till all he hath settled for me be made perfect in glory; I can discern, by my over-fall relation, that *Christ is now made of God unto me*, in *God's* under-fall counsels and ways, till all be swallowed up again in a full over-fall way in glory, with the Glory-man, as if the fall had never entered in, to prolong or obscure the open coming of the glory-union, or as though I had never had one lust in my heart, *I believe; therefore have I spoken.*

Behold now through all the mighty heights of love, and see the wonderful depths of the riches of the knowledge of *God*! Behold what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of *God*, *John* iii. 1. Oh! wonderful love of the Son of *God* in becoming a *Christ* for us! Oh! wonderful love of the Spirit, in making good in application and execution the whole plan and grand design of grace, as fixed in the glory-man, in the love of the Father from everlasting! Therefore, as *Christ* has loved the church, as the Father hath loved him, it is impossible that the church in the *Canticles* should strive, as *Mr. Hunt* says, to express her love to him in equal strains of his love to her.

CHAP. IV.

The everlasting Love of God to his Elect vindicated.

NOW I come to the everlasting love of the Father to the elect, yet still with our eye upon Christ, the beloved pattern, *John xvii. 23, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.* From hence it is a thousand times more consistent to believe God's everlasting love to us, upon the foundation of his loving Christ, as Christ, than to believe God's love to us begins with our faith, repentance, obedience, and qualifications on earth; I say, God's everlasting love, for I am not yet come down from the super-lap-
 farian mount. How consistently doth God's everlasting love he speaks of in *Jer. xxxi. 3.* fall in with all those texts which speaks so much of God's love to Christ, it is far more agreeable to match it with that love which begun from everlasting with the Glory-man, before the production of his works of old, than to date God's love to my person, from my yesterday's faith and repentance, and my to-day holiness in good works, as the Arminians do. Let us consider the text, *the Lord hath appeared of old, saying, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.* The Lord hath appeared of old unto me; of old, says God, can't thou remember when? But our translators, understanding, it may be, the Hebrew better than the mystery of the love in the text, have thought fit to render the period more smooth and intelligible, by putting in the word *Saying*, the Lord hath appeared of old unto me saying, but it is better without it, and thus read, the Lord hath appeared of old unto me; and there stop, for there the Lord stops the church, and takes her up, will not give her time to say more, when she comes to express herself, but breaks forth himself, yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore in time I have drawn thee with loving kindness, she says of old, but how old she could not tell; therefore God runs it beyond the bounds of time, advances it higher than old, he puts an everlasting date upon it, as well as a reality unto it, *Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love*, a love before drawing thee, for I derive all my drawing of thee from it, a love that has caused thy faith, and did not tarry for it, I made sure of that in covenant with my Son in union with the Glory-man, now in Heaven, and shall come down from thence to be the incarnate man upon earth; and though this ancient love is a riddle, "a riddle to thee that art under the influential drawings
 " of it, the time is not yet come that much of it shall break forth,
 " yet I have a day in mine eye when I shall have all my people
 " acquainted with my love." For I have loved thee with a love
 C that

that runs along in a speedy fixed parrallel with my love unto the man that is my fellow; I have put him and thee both in an orderly succession, both into one covenant, both into one bond-union, and everlasting love has joined you both together; I have loved you to be mine, and to be both with me for ever; there's thy name with him, there's thy glory in him, there's thine and his charter, in the volume of the book, in the everlasting rolls, and I have put it into thy husband, who is also in thy maker's hands; *therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee*, it is for this reason I have overcome and won thy heart with love; I have brought thee to my feet, and subdued thy own rebellious will, put up all, pardoned and forgiven every provocation, I have provided all to give thee, and not hazard the loss of all with an offer unto thee; I have provided faith, repentance, and holiness for thee, if I had made them conditions, then I had lost thee, them, and all for ever; but I have made them pieces of thy enjoyments in the everlasting union, thy faith came in at this door, thy repentance flows from my everlasting favour; it is expressed thus: I have loved thee with an everlasting love, not I will love you, or I do love you with an everlasting love, which would have argued the thing to be done, or just have taken date; but I have in the past tense, which proves the everlasting nature and commencement of it, the everlastingness of it that hath been, is to be perpetuated to an everlasting that is to come.

Hence observe, the love of God is the glory of his grace, it is the quintessence of all his mercy to his elect, even whilst they lie dead in trespasses and sins, the fall being decreed subserviently to exalt the riches of God's grace, *Eph. ii. 4, 5. But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.*

First, *Mal. i. 2, 3. I have loved you, saith the Lord: yet you say wherein hast thou loved us?* Wherein, says he, in election and all that belong to everlasting settlements; and loved you so as never to hate you; I have loved anciently before the foundation of the world. Come into time, and I have loved you always; I have made and preserved all, *but you only have I loved*; it is the mystical body of Christ that God hath loved with the same everlasting love, as he loves Christ as the head of the Church.

Second, I have loved first, and brought it about upon an everlasting security, then you have loved next, *herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, 1 John iv. 10.* loved us before we loved him, therefore be sure, *if any man love God, the same is known of God, 1 Cor. viii. 3.* He that loveth is known of God antecedently to any man's loving him; and known of God influentially before his faith, as wrought by love, *we love him because he first loved us, 1 John iv. 19.* the Father chose us to love before we loved, the Son ransomed us to love before we loved, the Holy Ghost renewed us to love before we loved the Lord. The love of God in settlements from everlasting, the love of God in ransom, the love of God in regeneration, is a love that every way prevents us.

Third,

Third, I have loved before drawing, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee, because I have loved thee with an everlasting love, in the very sub-lapsarian or under-fall settlements, in the appointment of things, upon the pre-ordination of the fall; love is still before conversion, *Rom. v. 8*. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us: It was as free to God to love, to love us before the world was, as to love us yesterday, in our blood, or a few years ago, when we were sinners, and had not through grace believed; not brought home to God through Christ; Oh! the riches of eternal grace! Oh! the privileges of this ancient love, when God comes to break it up, and to bring it forth in time. "It was this thought that drew my soul first and last to Christ, in reading Mr. Charnock's discourse of God's being the author of reconciliation in the covenant of redemption; then it was I felt the first effectual call of grace; Oh! it was then I closed with Christ upon this doctrine, in which he had so long before closed with me in a Redeemer's covenant; and from thence I date my new birth, after I had been from a child sober, well educated, constantly read the scriptures, two if not four chapters every day; prayed secretly upon my knees to God twice every day, having been always used to it from six years old; yet as I grew up I found tender conviction grow sharper, and, as *St. Paul* says, *still when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died*. Religion did not kill this sin, but sin knew at last how to strike at this religion; and that after my growing stricter and stricter, I wrote sermons, I prayed longer, I read Mr. Allein's works, Mr. Baxter's works, and the more I grew acquainted with these, I thought the more vehemently I had committed the unpardonable sin; I heard a multitude of preachers, these were all agreed to turn me into an anvil, and smote every blow upon me; sometimes I fell into desperation, always remained in horrid unbelief of the gospel, I expected Hell, and as verily believed it to be my portion, as I believed there was a God that made the world; nevertheless I durst not omit reading, praying, and hearing, but went on in all duties as formerly; as I grew up my desperation continued and increased, because I had not done duties enough to rely on, and plead with God; Yet if I prayed half an hour with some enlargement, I would labour to draw some comfort from thence, and persuade myself that this was sanctification; I fled to it as my refuge, but by and by sickness came upon me, and a sense of God's wrath wet my mind as a storm; then all the preachers in the world could not make me believe that I was one rush the better for all my duties; but when God raised me again, then I assented to the preachers marks and signs of grace, thought all was well, went on, and found peace, till the popish plot in 1678, and lo! we all apprehended the French coming, and that London, where I then was, in danger of being consumed with new flames, and the Papists rising to cut our throats; but that which was then the most terrible to me was, that pale horse in *Rev. vi. 8*. which

" always ran in my mind, that carries double, and has got *death*
 " *and hell behind him*. And what became of all this seriousness?
 " (for I jested not with religion) I began, from observing the su-
 " pineness of Christians by profession, to love looseness and levity
 " in ministers and people, and to hate religion, for, notwithstanding
 " all my shew, I had never cordially embraced it, my obedi-
 " ence was my hard task, and not my delight; so that my educa-
 " tion and profession ended in apostacy, and a slumber in sin for ma-
 " ny years, after all my zealous profession of Mr. Baxter's doctrine
 " and way to Heaven, which, *to me*, proved the greatest doctrine
 " of licentiousness I ever knew: and thus it was with my soul,
 " till God directed me to Mr. Charnock's book; and what was it
 " I found in that book which converted me? Why, it was the
 " spirit of the Lord that turned my heart in a moment, in manag-
 " ing God's everlasting love to me in a covenant way, which the
 " Father had made with Christ before the foundation of the world;
 " Oh! then my repentings were kindled together, that I should
 " go on sinning against him that had been always loving me; the
 " spirit of God struck in with it, and hath given another power in
 " religion to my soul, to different fruits than ever I felt before,
 " though, for want of courage and strength in my soul, I used to
 " dash my preaching with some of the old mixtures; nevertheless,
 " it was this everlasting kindness drew me, won me, melted me,
 " broke a whole heart of stone at once; and I have enjoyed ex-
 " perimentally its power and supports for near twenty years, a
 " change of life from a change of heart.

" *THEE, I have loved thee with an everlasting love*: Oh! this ec-
 " cho! loved thee! this sweetness of individuation! this consol-
 " ation of the joyful sound! for the spirit of God useth it to a
 " single person as well as unto the church mystical! Oh! the
 " riches of grace, unsearchable grace and love! what a wonder of
 " the gospel, that the Holy Ghost, should make it out beyond
 " questioning, to me, that *he loved me, and gave himself for me*?
 " And the sensation of this everlasting love hath not worn off, but
 " increased year after year, ever since it pleased God to reveal his
 " Son in me; that now I love his government, his yoke, his or-
 " dinances, which, with all my old religion, *I hated*. I find now
 " if my frame alters, the times alter, my state does not alter; my
 " Lord and my God, alters not; my assurance, my joy, my strength,
 " alters not; all which I have from God the Father, through Je-
 " sus the Mediator, by the Holy Ghost the comforter, in its con-
 " straining power, for I dare not, nay I am not inclined to spend
 " my time, my thoughts and affections, as if I was under my old
 " way of religion; the power of this gospel doctrine, I am sure
 " I have found it to come with another spirit, life and power, than
 " our present union-men believe."

I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore the voice comes,
 the trumpet sounds, the jubilee opens in an everlasting gospel, in
 counsel and contrivance, purpose and promise, in covenant set-
 tlement, and all in Christ Jesus; therefore, with loving kindness

have

have I drawn thee, aye, drawn thee indeed, not driven thee, this is man's doings, not thy maker's ; it was the Holy Ghost's work to draw thee to Christ, not to an empty profession. So that the everlasting love of the Father, in his Son Christ Jesus, is the foundation cause, spring, motive and covenant, that secures all, that secures my holiness and happiness. And now, in this everlasting love, we come to know in the chain of wonders the marriage love prepared : God saw it was not meet that the covenant-glory-man should be alone, though he stood in union with the Son of God, and had grace and glory settled upon him before the world began, yet he is not to stand alone, but must have a bride, a spouse ; therefore He is called the Husband and Bridegroom of his church ; and in *Isa. ix. 6.* the everlasting Father ; which he could not be without having everlasting children, which was in his mind-counsel and purpose, for father and child are coeval, of the same date ; a man is a man before he has an offspring, but not a father before he has a child. This person, our dear Lord Jesus, was not to be alone, therefore the Father predestinated a spouse for him ; presented a spouse unto him in all that grandeur, glory, perfection and beauty, that infinite wisdom had ordained for her, and he was to bring her home complete in all this beauty, *as a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.* For I am not in time to come to what I was in eternity with God ; nor shall I come up to it till I get into the other ocean of eternity, upon the backside of time. For the spouse of Christ was to be a glorious body to him, a glorious spouse unto this Man-Christ, chosen in, and when brought forth in covenant settlement, was given to this Man, subsisting in God, and this glorious Husband was bestowed upon her ; so God himself, in the personal union of both natures, lays the foundation of his grace in himself to marry her, and to make that secret marriage in eternity, the unchangeable security of her open marriage in the gospel-day of power, and at the resurrection-day before all creatures, according to *Isa. v. 4, 5.* *For thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of host is his name, and thy Redeemer the holy one of Israel.*

Here take notice, that this desolate and barren wife was the Gentile church, long before the gospel had reached her, or before she had to men a (open) being in the world, yet, at that time, her maker was her husband, inasmuch as his love is the bond of the relation, it was all done to God, though it was all to be done as to men ; for God had made it in the settlements that all the elect were become a secret spouse to Christ, that in time openly it might appear ; that his love to them was as Christ has declared, *John xvii. 23.* *And hast loved them as thou hast loved me ;* that is, hast loved the head and the members with the same grace, hast loved the bridegroom and the bride with the same love together ; *as thou hast loved me,* to make me their head and husband, *so hast thou loved them,* to make them my members and married spouse. Observe here, that Christ was a believing husband when she was an unbelieving wife, and that he loved her as he loved himself ; *as the father hath loved me, so have I loved you ;* from whence can this proceed in an unchangeable

ble God, but from his grace in Christ Jesus by everlasting settlements? And here I would draw some useful observation, of this rich, this glorious doctrine of everlasting love.

Use the First, I think it is no ways expedient for me to overlook the heart-rising, and lip-rising enemies against this doctrine of everlasting love, in the sense of union-grace before believing; many, rather than believe it, choose to die not only ignorant of it, but in strong opposition to it. But, blessed be God, he stirs me up to give a faithful warning, to blow the gospel trumpet whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear; for we live in a sleepy age, professors are mostly engaged about the war, and what's the news? instead of what's the truth, and what's the gospel? Oh! this everlasting love of God for me! It is a love in him quickening me, as it came down to my poor soul; this helps my faith upon every remembrance, more than all the dead, flat, cold formalities of offers and conditions; they rather strike the Christian dumb than help his faith.

Second, That Christ is mine, who saves me eternally; he must be mine with God before faith in the preparations and settlements of everlasting love; and mine as certainly to God before I believe, as he will be mine to my own certain knowledge when I get to Heaven to him! Sirs, have you courage enough (I speak to Ministers) to defend your hats if a man pluck them off your heads? And have you not courage enough to stand up for the doctrine of the church in her faleness throughout all ages, in her mystical head from everlasting; if it be but a dead frame, or natural courage, it is best to exercise that for God, than to suffer men, by their natural courage, to run down the ways of God. Must the love of God be suspended till the sinner's faith, unless it be a love of pity? Doth not God delight in my person in Christ, even while he pities me in Adam? God's pity is, indeed, one of the sweet points of the Gospel, *Psal. cxvii. 2. for great is his compassion towards us*; and as the Heavens are higher than the earth, so is his mercy, coming from this everlasting love in Heaven, towards them that fear him; and as his mercy is the supernatural cause of that fear, so his everlasting love, founded in his good will, is the cause of that mercy shewn. Nevertheless, this distinction of God's love, that he loves his elect, with a love of pity, before he believes, and with a love of delight after he believes, is a very pitiful and empty distinction in the sense of the schools, not to be followed by the preachers of the Gospel; for the very supposition supposes what is impossible to be, viz. a change in the divine Being, that his love increases in his mind; that it is not to me before I believe what it is after, which supposes the change in the creature, to make a change in God. Must my interest in Christ be a doubt in itself, because it is a doubtful thing to me till I have the spirit of faith that discerns it? Must an interest in Christ be an impossible thing till faith secures it? Must faith realize and ascertain my interest to God, because thereby it is realized and ascertained to myself? Faith makes it no surer to God than it was before; therefore, let men remember to give more glory to God than to faith; and more glory to Christ, who is the revealed object of faith,
than

than to the acts of faith. Ah! it is pity that any of God's elect sit under those *that are unskillful in the word of righteousness*; it is looked upon as an high attainment in gospel-preaching, if ministers do get so far into their work as to *press the poor soul to come to Christ*, though they never open the object suitably; pay too little regard to the Spirit's working faith, and exciting faith when wrought, and all because they are unacquainted with the *full provision of grace*, that has been made by the *everlasting love of the Father*. The preacher presses thee to come, *poor soul!* but he should tell, that thy life, and motion of coming, springs from thy interest in everlasting love, as all thy spiritual acts spring from thy spiritual interest in the object: Every motion in thy heart God-wards springs from thy union with Christ, as the life and growth of the branches spring from their union with the vine: As there is three union-relations to Christ, before faith commences in the soul, which is, first, election-union; second, representation-union; and, thirdly, regeneration-union; out of all these arises a fourth union, viz. a vital union, which is the soul's cleaving to Christ by faith.

I am for that faith that springs from union as ancient as eternity; for the church was Christ's beloved, and Christ was to God the church's beloved before the world was. I am for that created one that stood in God by settlement, and by that settlement mine: I am for that union, for that salvation, for that Heaven, for that love, the source of all, which were all mine by settlement, and then mine by communicative donation, and both ways by pure grace before I believed; neither is my faith the worse but the better for this when it comes, though this is called a licentious doctrine, but far from it, I have found it to be the most spirited and lively doctrine to love and obedience; when, on the other hand, I have found the doctrine of the law and conditions, to be the most licentious doctrine to me, even to a hating of God, and wishing there had been no religion in the world, and the time-dogma of sincere, instead of perfect obedience, brought me unto it.

On the other hand, I could never learn that this doctrine of everlasting love was a licentious doctrine; it binds the heart to obedience, the will to submission, the affections to love, and yet men, in their unrenewed nature, as naturally stumble at it as they do at the incarnation of Christ, who was *set for the falling, as well as the rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be spoken against*.

Oh! blessed be God for everlasting love to the elect in his son Christ Jesus! This same ancient grace is efficacious grace, the Holy Ghost thereby makes sound converts and settled Christians; establisheth them in the faith, whilst the conditional offers leave the mind in a tossed condition; but, by shewing that the operations of the Holy Ghost, in creating faith, springs from everlasting love, works faith and repentance, not as conditions, but as blessings of the everlasting covenant, the fruit of ancient love; not by the creature to be performed, but by the Holy Ghost to be wrought in the soul, as blessings from above; they grow not in nature's garden, but in the field of everlasting love;

love; this is the way the Lord directs unto, in *Jer. vi. 16.* *thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls.* As Christ stands in the old paths of election and covenant-settlement from everlasting, he thereby becomes the way of rest unto my soul.

"It is now under the consolations of God, by the blessed comforter, that though I find many alterations, as to comfort and enjoyment, yet I never fall away from the globe of love; as the motion began in God's heart with love, so all the springs of motion, that draws my heart to Christ, are lines directed onwards till they meet again in love's center, and in the same glory-center that began them. By this guidance I never loiter nor lag, to take into other grace-paths, (for now a-days nature goes for grace) but go on with love's beginning, till I meet in Heaven in love's point from everlasting; to wit, that everlasting that is to be drawn out to everlasting again; love, like a circle or a ring, had a beginning in itself before closed, but when closed, like a ring, it hath no end."

But I am stopt for a little moment in advancing forwards, let me retire and go back in my thoughts to everlasting love, as to its springs and rise, and thus I am helped to wait, to hope, and believe that my way to glory will open forwards again in order to my settling for ever there. And yet there is such an enmity in the minds of many of the godly, against love settled and secured to the church from everlasting, that they rather choose with the fool to believe that there is no God, than to give credit to it, or admit this sense of it." For this union I am speaking of, carries not for, nor depends upon, man's works, faith, and obedience, but is cemented by bonds of everlasting love; this love-union is the only frame that holds all the branch-unions consequent in time; thus Christ standing in God, and love settling upon our persons in him, faith and works will have their proper places, and is secured by it, for faith, repentance, holiness of heart, and holiness of life, can never fall nor fail whilst everlasting love, by the Holy Ghost's operation has engaged to perform them; 'tis here I rest through grace, on this I live, with this I choose to die: For I can see nothing against all this either in faith or manners, there is nothing against it in faith, for there is redemption-grace as the fruit of election-union to secure influential grace, by the spirit of faith unto the elect: There is nothing against it in manners, for there is Christ's wisdom in the nature and moral branches of his covenant, to secure the transcript of the law of God, in the natural ideas of virtue and honesty, to be written in every man's heart, as in the fullness and all-sufficiency of God's counsels, there could be nothing wanting in contrivance and security.

CHAP. V.

*Of the everlasting Love of Christ to the Church,
set forth from the Pattern Love of the Father.*

FROM those words in *John xv. 9.* *as the Father hath loved me, so I have loved you, as he hath loved me, as mediator, so have I loved you, as my mediatorial body, touching all the vast ends of my mediation.* For the church, the spouse of Christ, was ordained for the Son of God, in all that glory and perfection she is to be brought up unto; so the Son of God takes her in that presentation of his Father's offer, from the days of everlasting he takes her in union with himself the covenant-man. That now, as she is fore-viewed of God, being fore-known from all the rest in the innumerable diversity of all his creatures, and as thus fore-known and fore-viewed, is presented to his Son as God-man: so the Son of God, being co-equal with the Father in the same knowledge and fore-view, *took her*, accepts her at his hands, *Thine they were, and thou gavest them to me.* So now this act of the Father's presentation, together with his own acceptance, he becomes the grace-mediator and the glory-mediator too, in her being brought so nigh to God's eternal favour secretly, and therein, as that favour of God was settled on her to last eternally, in this ultimate branch of Christ's mediation, she shall derive and take up all the ancient, secret, and settled glory to be communicated before men and angels, at her abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory for evermore.

This diversity of mediations, doth not multiply persons in the mediator, but the different relations of Christ the alone Mediator, *1 Tim. ii. 5.* *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus;* but his mediatorial relations are differently branched forth in the word of God, he is her Redeemer, as she in all her individuals makes up his ransomed number: He is her Shepherd, as she is made his flock; he is a Father to the church in her new birth, therefore called his seed; he is her elder brother, as she is his sister; he is her king, her lord and law-giver, as she is his nation; and her bridegroom, as she is his spouse. Well, the Son of God, as God-man, received her of his Father, and therein loved her as his Father loved her, he immediately became one with her, in the vast thoughts and ways of God, and she becomes one with him as the Mediator, in the same ways and thoughts of God too. This union and oneness being settled and made to stand fast in the Mediator, was a union before the four-

dation of the world, a union delighted in of God, a union in the love of his delights; rejoicing thus thro' the days of everlasting in his secret works, I was daily his delight, says wisdom, as well before as after this confirmed union, for he was daily himself the delight of God in his secret works; so when the Father came afterwards, to shew him the redemption of his fallen spouse, it no ways interrupts the delight of God, nor the joys of Christ, but he goes on expressing the highest satisfaction, *Prov. viii. 31. Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.* God delighted in them as he viewed them in the Mediator, and the Mediator delighted in them as he viewed them with the Father, and received them at his hands.

Hence it comes to pass, from his own mediatorial love in choosing us as the Father hath chosen him, that we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, in the covenant-man, fore-ordained to glory, and by the covenant of Jehovah settled in it, as the apostle admirably speaks from the Holy Ghost, in those amazing words (not duly considered by interpreters) which describes the spouse of Christ, in *Eph. v. 30.* for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; for he had a secret glorious body (as he stood in God) before ours, or ever we had any being in Adam, therefore our bodies, flesh, and bones, comes into being, into nature, into grace, and into glory, by the pattern of his body, *who was the man of God's right hand.*

Indeed, we usually carry it no higher, than that he took our nature on him, not considering that he was first ordained in the nature-man, and then we were ordained next into his man-nature; O incomparable love! not to be matched by men or angels! what love hath Christ expressed to the church, which the church can never express to Christ! as our natural image comes from him, and when he hath given us a new nature, we cannot, in our new nature come to him and love him without himself drawing us; and yet all this, which we cannot comprehend, flows from his ancient love; for, consequently, Christ and the church were one mystically, as a man and his wife of twain becoming one flesh, are a figure of the mystical union between Christ and his church. Oh! equality of grace and wonder! has God pitched upon his son to be the man, so his son pitched upon the same choice to be the Mediator, and pitched upon the church as the Father had pitched upon her, and had made the presentation of her; Christ loved her, as man, from his Father, and chose to become her bridegroom; and in that relation, was kept secret until *the fulness of time*, as the Holy Ghost's phrase is about Christ's incarnation; he undertook to provide for her establishment, in the same relation to him, that she should be secured, maintained, and brought up for God.

This was the secret glory of the church, in her marriage-settlements between God and Christ; and this was the afore-preparing her unto glory, to wit, the open glory that was to follow, to be brought about by various ways and means, which was thereby to be wrought up to her secret glory, according to the pattern given him

him of the Father. The beginning of secret glory in the thoughts of everlasting love, together with the consummation of it in the open glory of Heaven, are, for substance, in these settlements one and the same glory to eternity; a glory settled, and then through gradual steps to be enjoyed; a glory in secret with the Lord, to be displayed openly to those which are the Lord's; whose glory will match with their ancient glory settled upon them by him whose ways are everlasting; so that the church must be just such a glory, such a perfect beauty presented unto God by Christ, as she had been presented unto Christ by God, and then she shall be openly to herself, what she had been secretly unto God and Christ from before the foundation of the world.

Oh! what a quickening doctrine hath this been to my soul! How graciously have I felt it! 'Tis none of my notion or opinion, but my faith; my very life to God in those times of love he has afforded me in beholding it! What encouragements, what experiences, what sweetening views of the King in his beauty have I enjoyed through the sealings of the spirit! and this, through faith, receiving what was certain before it. To illustrate it, whilst the Thames runs through London Bridge, it argues that there was the same river above bridge, before it; so if salvation, the forgiveness of sins, and eternal glory, be a rich and full stream of grace, running down through faith, it argues that that stream lay in Christ (the fountain of all grace) above faith and before it.

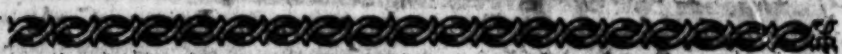
CHAP. VI.

Of the Everlasting Love of the Spirit to the Church, set forth from the pattern Love of the Father.

EVERLASTING Love, and good will to men, is the free result of all the persons in God equally, to all therefore which hath been said, I must add, the spirit comes into this wonder about the covenant-man, and Saviour of the elect (taking in the over-fall, and under-fall councils of God together) and good reason he should be consulted, who was to work it all over efficiently in the fair colours of a church's beauty, even Zion the perfection of beauty, *Psal.* 1. 2. from the Father and the Son, when the spirit had brought it up to a full exactness in the glory, as the counsels of God has ordered it in ways and means.

As Christ could not have been Christ without the Holy Ghost, so the church could not have been a church, without the spirit's everlasting love, in raising her up to that glory, in which she was

to be presented unto the Father. So the Holy Ghost was concerned in the formation and qualification of Christ's human-nature, as the covenant-man, and of accomplishing that glory, which the church was ordained unto, as the Holy Ghost loved the church with a free everlasting love, answerable, or correspondently as he loved Christ. For if Christ had not had a Church given him, the Father had never sent him, nor the Son had never given himself in the incarnate union, the Holy Ghost had never formed that flesh, nor formed that human and reasonable soul, nor had anointed the man Christ Jesus in that wonderful union, God-man. This evidently proves the love of the Holy Ghost unto the Elect, for the sake of whom Christ, under the operations of the Holy Ghost, is a Saviour, a Jesus; as the Holy Ghost reveals his name anciently, and all as suited to the mediatorial office, therefore it is plain, that the Holy Ghost had an eye unto us, loved us in Christ before we believed, yea from the dates of eternity; which may be argued from the Holy Ghost's anointing and sending Christ to save his church, which, Christ himself declares, for, says he, *the spirit of the Lord God is upon me; he hath anointed me to preach the gospel, Isa. xlviii. 16. and now the Lord God, and his spirit hath sent me.* He hath sent me for the Church's sake, as a teacher and leader for them, to bring them up out of great tribulations, and to make way for the spouse, to come up out of the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved. He hath sent me under his own anointing, to bring her up with all the powders of the merchant, and to go before the glorious company at the head of the whole train; he hath sent me to the execution of my whole office, which is an undeniable proof that the Holy Ghost was jointly in the counsel and settlement of all before the world was; and so cogently proves the everlasting love of God the Spirit to the Church, taking of the things of Christ and holding us sweetly there.



C H A P. VII.

Of all the Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, considered together in the Love of God to the Man Christ, and to the Elect, as to Ways and Means of its open Consummation.

THE Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are one in the execution of the plan of salvation by the man Christ Jesus; for the upper order, or over-fall way, was glory, first ordained as the ultimate end, and creation and the fall, grace and restoration, the next means to bring it to an open consummation of the everlasting love

love of God in all his persons, to the human nature in Christ, and to the Elect in him.

Consequently we must of a certain cleave to the sublapsarian way in the executions of all God's counsels; for grace in redeeming the elect and justifying them as fallen, &c. comes in after the decree of the fall; for it is only a fallen creature that can be the proper object of justifying grace, yet all these decrees and settlements of it were in Christ before the foundation of the world; so that the executive decrees of the fall, and then justifying of the elect, in, by, and through Christ, were to bring God's first purposes of everlasting love, settled in the secret glory, and his purposes of the ultimate glory to pass, by intermediate things; for justifying and saving elect sinners does come in between love from everlasting in the secret glory of Christ and the church, and love's ultimate enjoyment in the everlasting glory of it.

Thus first and last things are to meet by and through the intermediate steps of creation, the fall, redemption, justification, the new nature holiness of life, &c. all in their order, and not one thing to be disjointed or out of place, and all this to set out love to the uttermost; for otherwise Jehovah was able to have given us the open glory (if it had been his pleasure) as soon as he had given up an open being. But now to bring God's first and ultimate purposes together, in a continued chain of love-work, carried on by all the persons in God, the links of which chain are various, sin, affliction, sickness, and death, these come in to accomplish God's absolute thoughts and purposes of the open glory of Christ and the church together: Thus, through sin, suffering, and grace, it shall be wrought up to a full open glory in the issue, without any intervening sin or cloud, to stain or darken it to all eternity.

It was then ordered, in those settlements of the everlasting marriage, that though to try her, she should be left to commit adultery with Mammon, and marry the creature, yet, I say, though the church was left to marry another husband, who was not her Maker, nevertheless she should be called, and embrace the call too, and return to her first husband, and know, by the light of the gospel, that it was better with her than now, as it is said of Israel, *Hos. ii. 7.* And why was the fall ordered? To shew it to be all of grace, and to exclude boasting, not to exclude the righteous man found in Christ making his boast in the Lord, or declaring the work of God upon his soul, which is his duty, and the humble shall hear the same and be glad, whilst the proud and carnal shall stumble at it.

Well, this covenant with Christ, that was well ordered in all things and sure, had subordinate counsels in it to permit the fall. And why? To bring it about as a way and means in matters of the spouse's concern, and as an occasion to prove her husband's love, and his utmost faithfulness, who was her Maker, joined with the utmost mercy of God, and power of the most high to restore her, but not to restore her to *Adam*, for she never fell from grace and glory in *Adam*, for her grace and glory was given her in Christ Jesus,

Jesus, before the world began ; it was never put out of her husband's hands to *Adam* ; love, faithfulness, and mercy do all therefore combine to restore her to Christ, her husband, out of *Adam's* ruins, who has kept her portion for her, in whom she partook of all from everlasting.

Lo ! the difference between her and the rest in *Adam* ; for the non-elect had all their portion put in *Adam's* hands, and they lost all in him, but the elect had grace and glory kept in Christ's hands, and only their nature condition, or their natural state, put into *Adam's* ; that now Christ, their husband, by that grace reserved in store for them, recovers gradually her nature losses, by better things than these, or than ever *Adam* had in *Eden*, for her restoration, by grace, is more glorious than ever *Adam's* state was in innocency. Though the church fell from Christ, as created in his image and likeness, yet never fell from the grace and glory of his heart, settled upon her in him before the world began ; for it was not in the power of sin or Satan, to remove what God had fixed by oath, and settled in covenant ; this was what preserved her, therefore her Maker, which was her husband, stretched forth his hands, and caught her, as the Greek verb used for his taking on him the seed of *Abraham* doth signify.

It was wisely ordered, that upon her fall with the rest of mankind, she was not absolutely so great a loser as they, for the rest of mankind lost their all, all their purity, righteousness, and innocency ; and indeed she lost the same, but here lies the difference, she had another stock, her main stock was in safer hands than *Adam's*, *being hid with Christ in God* : Nevertheless it was ordered, to be impossible she should be ever brought to God, and so to Heaven, to her husband, till all the obstacles of her lapsed state be removed by Christ's mediation ; God's everlasting purposes were that all his love should stop, not be broken off, and unchangeableness of love within God, is consistent with stopping the out-goings of love, till Christ by his mediation became God's ways to us ; for by the fall we lost his love communicatively, though by the fall we lost it not provisionally, for Christ was not to come, to purchase his Father's love, but to open the communications of it, to open love's passages for all sorts of grace, as ransom grace, reconciling grace, the grace of access, comforting and consoling grace, and so open all the passages of love, which the fall had either shut or stopped up.

It was an unspeakable scene of glory laid ! Nevertheless, before it opens, it is most fit the glory should enter by the door of grace, for executive purposes, by execution have fully shewn grace to be grace, in that the fallen creature, by itself could never restore itself ; God therefore, to bring all to pass, ordained the means, blest them, to answer the end, to accomplish his everlasting glory, or to meet as so many lines in the center, in the man Christ Jesus and his spouse ; and now it is that the secret love of God, brought forth in the open ways and means of its execution, remains according to the everlasting preparations he had made in Christ.

But God has ordered, that all the ancient glory be suspended
till

till the church be gathered in collectively by regeneration, which was to be the work of many ages; and she is to pass through many changes in her time-state, she must find it an hard thing to believe, (though the easiest thing in life when God gives faith) to believe stedfastly into the fulness of Christ, and see therein into that ancient glory which was settled upon her from everlasting.

To make this sure, the Lord Christ, the Mediator, condescends with the Father in a humbling wonder; they ordained that the Mediator should be emptied for the spouse's sake, and the glory-man put on her dust, 'tis ordered she must be born, left to sin, made to die; 'tis enacted, that the Mediator must be born, and die for her, and restore her; the royal law passes by the votes of all the three in Heaven; accordingly *Adam* is created in the first open human means, by all the persons in God, and it must be in God's image, or after the nature and likeness of the glory-man, not after the grace-likeness, much less the glory-likeness of the Mediator; our image, our likeness, says the three that bear record in Heaven, the Mediator being then by covenant God's fellow, in whom all his works of nature, grace and glory, are known, therefore called, *Col. i. 15. the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; whom the Father loved before the foundation of the world, John xvii. 24.* in this way of interpretation, a clear answer appears to the old cavil, How can there be an everlasting union, an union before faith, when we are described as dead in trespasses and sins, children of wrath by nature, &c. How can a man be related to two heads at the same time? I answer, as a man is related in his spirit or soul part to the Father of spirits, the creator, and at the same time, in his body part, is related to his earthly Father, so he may as consistently be related to two heads, to *Adam* as a head of nature, to Christ as a head of grace and glory, as all nature's treasure was put into *Adam's* hands, so all grace and glory treasures were put into Christ's hands; but *Adam's* nature by sin, being corrupt, ours from him is so too: Thus by the loss of nature's innocency, nature's holiness, and nature's communion with God, we are children of wrath. But then, as related to Christ our spiritual head of grace and glory, we lost nothing by the fall of that glory settled upon us in him before the world began: Hence it is a believer is perfect, and imperfect, holy, and unholy, at the same time, on a different account, and yet no contradiction, as a room is related to the owner and the lodger, to the tenant and the landlord, yet no one counts this inconsistent.

But our fall from nature makes it absolutely necessary, that we be all recovered and made the children of God again, by faith in Christ Jesus, to bring us up to a meetness for, and possession of the inheritance, settled upon us as everlasting children, or children of Christ, by adoption from the Father, upon which, when the Holy Ghost gives us faith, we are built: This dissolves the old knot, how we are in a different way, not how in the same way related unto two different heads, our nature head, by *Adam*, our grace and glory head by Christ, and so the love of God appears unchangeable, one round of love, past, present, and to come, agreeing with his
name

name, *I am*, John iv. 16. and we have known and believed the love that God hath to us, God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him; all which sets forth how the Father hath loved Christ, and how he hath loved us in Christ, and how Christ hath loved us according as he hath seen the Father love us.

And as the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; by this is plainly meant the glory-love anciently towards Christ-man, and anciently towards the spouse with him; the *batb loved*, and *been loved*, will match with the everlasting settlements, and with the covenant of his love and peace towards us.

Besides, if Christ had stood thus in the love of God, as the man from everlasting, and the church from everlasting with him, to what purpose had the old testament stiled him actually the man, *Zech. i. 10.* and relatively as the husband, *Isa. liv. 5.* and bridegroom of his spouse; and describe him so long as the open man, if he was not actually with God the secret man, the covenant-man, in these times of the old testament? It is sound to hold the person of the Mediator, God-man, to be one person and two distinct natures, but it is not sufficient, if we do not begin the human nature as the secret glory-man with the Father from everlasting, therefore the Old Testament discoveries are called shadows of good things to come; but could there be a shadow before there was the body to cast that shadow? As the shadow of a tree comes from the tree, but the tree is before the shadow of it, so Christ existed with God, and in God, then he cast a shadow of himself, by the rays of the law; and these shadows had never been, if there had not been a body to cast them; therefore the church says, *Psal. lxxx. 17. Let thine hand be upon the man of thy right hand, whom thou madest strong for thyself.* The church in that psalm, is under troubles, and she cries out in her affliction with an eye to Christ; Oh! says she, Lord, if thou dost thus and thus with such worms as we, thou wilt bring us to nothing! If thou dost exact payment of us to divine justice, out of our insolvent stock, we must go to a perpetual prison. Oh! no, God's remedy must be our remedy, his provision our payment, let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand! Let thy hand be upon the man in secret glory, upon the man exalted as responsible for ever! and what follows? *Upon the son of man, whom thou madest strong for thyself; madest strong, by giving him a covenant-subsistence in the second glorious person, for himself to issue in his own glory.*



C H A P. VIII.

Of the Love of the Father, and Christ to the Church, briefly closed.

TO sum up the matter, as the Father had predestinated, that Christ should behold his spouse, the spouse of God fall, die, and be lost, as to help and recovery by herself, or by any other decreed to be above by creation; and as the Father predestinated him Mediator in the said covenant capacity, to undertake for this ancient fore-viewed spouse, now fallen into enmity and alienation from the life of God, the Father predestinated him to go through all manner of degrees of love for her, calling up all the gradual and successive changes he had in his eye and thoughts for the covenant-man to go through; as the Father had contrived and pitched upon this way of love to be in personal union with his Son; to go through all kinds of trials, mocking, derision, death, and burial, to make an atonement for sin, to bring in an everlasting righteousness, a work that all the Angels in Heaven could never have done, that there should be ground in his low estate to plead, *Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee before the world was, John XVII. 5.* And as the Father had predestinated, that God the Spirit too, should come after Christ, and finish the applicatory office of a comforter, that the church after her fall might be the restored spouse, even as was counselled between and among them in the counsel of peace, and so present her faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy.

Thus choosing all, and dying for her, in her stead he is made sin, feels God's wrath, pours out his soul, and love at the same bleeding wound for her! and in the infinite love, God in the union of the man bore her, is made a curse for her, conquers it by dying, and rising again, that death had no more dominion over him; he raiseth her up mystically, and secretly with himself, and clothes her with the robes of righteousness in glory with him the man, according to the glory of the settlements from everlasting. *Isa. LXI. 10. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. I will, my soul shall.* It is spoken of the church's glory-power, and glory-will, to rejoice and be joyful in the open bridegroom-glory, and open vestures of the church's bridal state, in the glory kingdom of the resurrection. This was future as to an open being unto her, and yet was past as to its secret being of it to her, and as to the open being

being of it to God: For he hath clothed me, he hath covered me, he hath done it as a bridegroom, who at the consummation of his open nuptials, being a great Prince, doth it in the open face of man.

Here now it is that Christ's love rises up into an equality of God's love of her, in that he was pleased to do all this in union for the church. Indeed predestination in Christ, and redemption by him, are coequal depths and wonders of the grace of God; so that when the Lord Jesus Christ, by redemption and advocacy, and the Holy Ghost by regeneration, and the ultimate measures of sanctification, have finished all the church's glory, by bringing it up exactly to that amazing pattern-glory of the predestination-love of the Father, the Lord will open the mysteries of her glory-union, and then shall be openly brought to pass that mysterious saying, in Christ's prayer, *John xvii. 21. That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us; yea, one into us, as the original in ver. 23d expresseth it.*

This is to be clearly made out at the open day of glory: This to be effected by the same perfect and final marrying of all the members of the mystical body in an open union-glory into God and Christ, as was laid with God upon the foundation of eternal settlements. Thus I have made out, how a thing is done secretly in Christ, by settlement of the Father, as the foundation and pattern of doing the same thing outwardly, by Christ, and have hereby shewn that the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, do act distinctly in their order thro' Christ, and I look upon this way to be the shortest way of expressing things, and an abstract of the marrow of the gospel.

Oh! how has Christ set out his love in the Canticles, every way answerable to all the high discoveries I have represented his love by in other portions of his word; and was the spouse of Christ ever in a capacity of loving him at this rate, she knew she could not, when she had a glimpse of his love in that vehement love, described, *Cant. viii. 6. Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm, for love is strong as death, jealousy is as cruel as the grave, the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.*

Set me as a seal upon thine heart. Oh! it was a higher strain of love and privilege to be so engraven, than it could be of love and duty to desire it! it was more for her to be set as a seal upon Christ's heart, than it was to ask it from her own heart, and with her lips together.

As a seal upon thine arm. It was a higher strain of love in Christ, to seal the spouse upon his arm, or mediation-power wherewith he was invested, to embrace her, and so present her name to God, in the very office she saw he was to bear in Heaven for her, viz. the mediatory-relation he undertook to manage and pursue as an High Priest with the Father, in all his pleas to God, than it could be a strain of love in her to beget it at the throne of grace.

For love is strong as death. Oh! says she, seal me, for I am sure thou

thou wilt stick at nothing for me; thy love is strong, and will not flinch at death, but is as strong as death, as death of pierced hands and feet; my Lord designs to die for me, so strong is his love to chose it; so strong is his love to feel it; so strong is his love to wade through it; but why is it not expressed stronger than death; if it be meant of Christ's love? I answer, because stronger than death, was the fulness of power to conquer death; whereas here the scope is to set out love to undertake and taste of death. Now love, as strong as death, sets out the fulness of love to undertake it; love, strong as death, to choose a strong death, the death of the Cross for us; and then it is the power of the lover still, and so stronger than death to conquer what he undertook.

Jealousy is as cruel as the grave, the coals thereof are coals of fire. As if she had said, Seal me! Seal me! For I know the fire of thy love will bring thee down hither! and lo! when thou comest into the world, I know already, by the breathing of thy lips, that thou wilt do more than that for me: Thou wilt do more than seal me, thou wilt die for me! Oh, seal me for thine! For I know thou wilt trust me alone in this world! Seal me, for I am not safe without it! the Devil courts me, the world sometimes flatters me, my own wicked heart betrays me, and is oftener worse than all I feel upon me; Oh! seal me, seal me, and do not live in jealousy, for it would be a greater trial to thee, to bear the loss of me, in my departing from the Lord my God, because I am thy spouse, one with thee; a jealous thought of losing me from my constant duty, from my faithfulness and loyalty to thee, my Lord, *breaking wedlock*, and marriage-covenant, as a wife with thee in the dear relation, is a fire that will make thy love quickly break forth, to secure me more to thee from the power of Sin than ever, for the Lord my God is a jealous God. Thus she goes on, and concludes of these coals of jealousy, that they are fire, which hath a most vehement flame, it will break out as flame that kindles from the fire, and shew the vehemency of the love of Christ to me; which proves, that the love of the spouse bears no comparison of the love of Christ to her. Therefore the saints' love is pointed out, as acts of obedience and submission to Christ, not as acts of love equal to him, *Job. xiv. 21. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

He that hath my commandments. He must first have them engraven upon his heart, before he can keep them; a knowledge of Christ's ordinances before he can obey them; he must obey them from the grace that wrought the knowledge of them.

He it is that loveth me. From my first love, settled upon him, and communicated to him, from the pattern-love of the Father, the fountain from whence all the springs of influential love flow, that operates upon his heart to love me evidentially before men and angels, to testify it, by keeping my commandments.

And he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father. He shall be

loved of my father more openly in his experience, by sweet sensation, and communion-power, through ~~me~~ the Mediator, by the Holy Ghost, in evidence to his soul that cannot be denied; the Father will love him more sensibly than he hath yet discovered himself unto him.

And I will love him. I will love him more openly, more in view, and discovery, by extraordinary meltings of his soul, even into tears of joy; I will love him more by my own power, in conveying the spirit of my Father's love afresh; I will love him into encreased tastes thereof.

And will manifest myself unto him. So that the love is explained to be manifestative, [latter] love, and built upon settlement-love; I will go on with love and pursue the gracious track thereof; and so bring him out of clouds and darkness, where he was wont to lie down afraid, as it follows in verse 23.

And my Father will love him. He will love him by open manifestation to his soul; he will open that to his experience he never saw; to his heart, he could not believe was in the heart of God for him; he will love him more into the knowledge of electing love, to melt and humble him, to rejoice and settle him, who can rest upon nothing but eternal grace, he will love him through all perils and dangers here below.

And we will come unto him. In a way of communion with the person of God, with more sensible operations of the presence of God, by the mighty comforter, and with more and greater evidences of the pourings out of the spirit of God upon that soul; and we will come unto him as Triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit.

And make our abode with him. His soul shall be our habitation; his affections the residence of our love, his comforts shall be strong, his joys shall abide, we will keep up the communion of heavenly life with the same blessed soul, he shall have more assurance, more standing grace, more fixed and endured steadfastness, and his joys and experience of the love of God shall not vanish. I would here urge a few arguments, to shew upon what foundation we are dear to Christ, as Mr. Hunt placeth dearness to Christ, upon prayer, striving against temptations and infirmities. But I place it according to the Scriptures, upon the following arguments.

Argument First. To be dear to Christ is above the reach of nature, above praying, and mourning for sin that dwelleth in me, &c. because to be dear to Christ is a foundation-grace, an under-ground-work of God's love, and so is to be discovered by other pieces of grace, of the same kind in the superstructure, as regeneration, knowledge of Christ, in opening the understanding to know him that is true, 1 *Job*. ii. 20. Now I come to know my dearness to Christ by what I see, feel, taste, &c. not by what I do, but by what I enjoy of God. It is his spirit, by the application of precious promises of pardon to my soul, that proves me dear to Christ, 1 *Cor*. ii. 12.

now not have received; not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might truly know the things that are freely given us of God. It is not prayer, but the discovery in prayer, that I make to be my evidence; when I am helped to look so by grace, in prayer to the interceding object of faith and prayer, here I have my comfort, here I behold my dearness in the views and enjoyments of my object Christ, for Christ, and the spirit, engross all the glory of the duty, all the evidences in duty; from whom I graciously receive them, therefore my dearness to Christ, springs from his love, not from my praying or mourning, &c.

Argument Second. To be dear to Christ, is free love. *Heb. xi. 4. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love.* Our conversion is built upon free grace, though brought about by severe justice done to Jesus Christ, for when God draws, we find both a sweet and effectual motion in it. The Father here shews us by the prophet, what he did by Christ; I drew them with such motives and arguments as I took from the first covenant-man, with bands of love, covenant love; obligations by free promise and oath to Christ: I loved him, and loved them in him, and gave them from everlasting to him; thus it is a love, not confined when I am pent up, but is free to give vent and utterance, and scope unto itself; sometimes it comes into the soul with a thought, a kindling power, a melting kindness, a sweet and irresistible impulse, a seal of loving kindness, and doth not meddle with our duty of praying, mourning, or striving, &c. but is so much above it, that it makes you come presently upon your knees, and perhaps solemnly too; yet, it may be, feel nothing of the drawings of divine love. So free is grace, I have known sometimes in prayer, I have lost all that sweet communion with God, I have had a few minutes before in heavenly meditation; yea, that communion which hath not been a sudden thing, but more fixed and durable in my soul; that which grace hath kept up a long time in holy meditations, when I have been neither writing nor reading, but walking, and often awakes in my bed; it hath soon worn off in the very act of praying, when I have thought to go to work more solemnly: Now if I had not a better way than praying, to know whether I am dear to Christ, what would become of me in point of service? what would any man know what to make of his soul's estate, that should sit under my ministry, when I was thus at a loss to give a consistent account, with the doctrines of salvation, how I am, or any other soul is, dear to Christ?

I am so far from praying to this end, that I may be dear to Christ, that I always, through some measure of grace or other, (blessed be the Lord) believe I am dear to him, as the principal cause and encouragement why I do pray unto him. And though my comfort is often damped in the coldness of my duty, yet I conscientiously continue my duty, why? to profess my subjection to the Lord, he is thy Lord, and worship thou him, *Psal. xlv. 11.* therefore, I prefer a cold prayer before none at all: It is better to

to bring words that want a soul, than neglect to bring our bodies, that have souls in them: *Take with you words, Hos. xiv. 2.* if you cannot take the spirit, and pray; still it shews me that I am not to judge of my state by prayer, except it be Christ's prayer for me, (and indeed one sight of Christ's love, is worth more than all the prayers of the church of God) yet I pray, to bless God that grace was so free to me in the wilderness, when I had thrown up all for the world, the flesh, and the devil; I pray to bring my thank-offering before him, that I was dear to Christ, before I put up one request to God in my life: Now here is reason to pray constantly, because I know that all believing prayer, is built upon Christ's intercession, and that spirit given me from Christ will teach me to pray with an eye to all further discoveries of love, which the Advocate hath made way for unto my soul: This is praying in faith, according to what God hath said shall come to pass, *that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear, Isa. lxxv. 24.*

Argument Third. To be dear to Christ, is preventing grace, in the very settlements of grace in Christ Jesus, as my calling, and consequently, my praying proceeds from those settlements and donations of grace that first made me dear to him, *2 Tim. i. 9. Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began.*

Argument Fourth. To be dear to Christ, is without a change: His love is still unchangeable, *2 Tim. ii. 13. if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful;* faithful to his promise and covenant; if we are unfaithful to our engagements, he is also faithful to renew us again unto believing; if we are frail or faulty, and from either cause do believe not, yea he was faithful for us, and to us, before we believed on him; to send Christ Jesus for us, to take away our sins, and the obstacles that should lie in the way of our effectual calling; as also to preserve us in Christ Jesus, 'till the time of our calling came, and in all he shews it to be the settlements of unchangeable grace that makes us dear to Christ.

Argument Fifth and last. To be dear to Christ, is an orderly love. It is a relation built upon, dear to God in love, and then at length, in flowing down, secures our obedience, praying and mourning, &c. as obedience flows from Christ's love, not Christ's love from our obedience. How then is it, if we do as our teachers and ministers direct us, we may be dear to Christ? Most certainly, if ever we do so, it is because we are dear; we were dear long before we did it, as the true and only ground of our being brought to do it.

To give the reader therefore some help, in a concise state of the matter, in a confidence and harmony according to the word of God, as yea and yea, not yea and nay, *let us, as wise and understanding what the will of the Lord is, Eph. v. 17.* look at a right conversion to the Kingly office of Christ. For all sound Christians, of any standing

standing in conversion to Christ, must, less or more, at one time or other, be convinced of this, that conversion must first be to Christ's priestly office, before it can be converted to his Kingly office; that is, it must first have some hope of pardon, before it can have any pleasure in obeying, though it is done by the power of the Kingly office, in the light of the teaching-office, or what we may call the prophetic office of Christ: For *Conversion*, or the act of turning, is always to do again, and to be repeated after every act of departure from the living God, though it be but a departure from him in our thoughts: Although *Regeneration* was wrought at once, in the same instant, and when we are brought to new acts of conversion, or turning again and again (I mean from self, from sin, and creatures) to eye him, and receive him as our gospel-salvation, still the same in his priestly office, the office of Christ in the matters of his righteousness and blood, whether sacrificed upon the cross, or pleaded in advocacy on the throne; in the light of this we discern his teachings, by the holy spirit, and in the peace and love of this, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, given unto us, we are prepared to turn unto him, as our King and Husband, under his own sweet and easy laws, suited to our new relation by the Holy Ghost.

Well then, 'till by fresh experience I feel his blood, and discern his sacrifice, his once offering up of himself, I am sure I can never yield afresh unto his sceptre; all Mr. Hunt's way, in his proposed state of trying your interest in Christ, doth but bewilder a poor soul; It is the blood of Christ, which the spirit in his work useth on me, takes away the stony heart within me; I know nothing else but this matchless result of free grace, which the spirit brings home, and applies sweetly, to dissolve it. Now, at the dissolving of this stone by blood, *the blood of Jesus, which cleanseth from all sin*, before I can find one law of Christ written in my heart, 'tis his gracious yielding to me is my alone comfort; I am assured of this, and can say, I truly experience it, for I never yielded up my heart to Christ, 'till Christ yielded down his hand to my heart: I always found the spiritual part of the work impossible; nay, I could not spiritually put forth one act in it, till the grace began on his side, my heart was a heart of stone, contrary to yielding, till his hand was a hand of love in the time of love, and fully reached my heart; the word is plain in *Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27.* there is cleansing of my person before the softening of my nature; a dirty stone may be washed before dissolving, but the whole applicatory work of the gospel begins with God's effectual calling us. The first of all is, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean;" then as a distinct and next thing in order, "a new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." This follows the cleansing part; and then, lastly, here are the principles of yielding obedience to Christ's Kingly office, "and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; ye shall keep my judgments to do them;" all this is done in order.

C H A P. IX.

Concerning the Redeeming Efficacy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE truth of which is, As a proper satisfaction was made to God by Christ, so the proper satisfaction (or atonement and full sacrifice) was an infallible particular one for all the sins of the elect; the responsibility of my surety is founded upon his deity, as the Son of God; and the qualification of his sacrifice, to pay my debt, is founded upon his covenant, as Mediator; my growing consolation ariseth from a sight of the spirit's work in my soul, a discerning faith, that Christ's satisfaction was made for me; therefore I believe through grace, it was made for me; before I came to Christ, I am experimentally encouraged it was for me to procure my heart to come to Christ, to encourage my heart to come to Christ, and take up my pardon with him as my own, and then to come to Christ for more confirming evidences of it, by more faith. And the Lord be pleased to give me gospel-faith, discerning-faith upon satisfaction made, and made for me, for my sins already, and though I cannot bring my heart to come, yet the *satisfaction* that Christ hath made for my sins *can*, and doth bring me to come to the glory of God by Christ. I must see the prevalency of the sacrifice made, and the propriety of the sacrifice settled in the Lord's covenant to be for me, if ever I come to Christ to receive consolation from him; for I look to what I see, the positive proper satisfaction made by Christ for me, and for all my sins before I had a heart to come, as the satisfaction of Christ made to God was for me, in order to procure a believing heart to come, even when I had no heart to come, to rest my soul on Christ, because I have the discoveries already, which were procured by the same satisfaction, as I saw his righteousness and blood were for me in particular. My heart never spiritually set out upon a may-be, it was otherwise. I did not come to Christ upon any persuasive ifs, but I came upon positive drawings to the object God-man, in clear and distinct discoveries of his person, righteousness, and grace to my soul; I felt his power, after I beheld his fulness; I saw it to be for me, before I had a heart and courage to take it up; again, he drew me to himself, he won me to his righteousness, melted my heart, and overcame me with his beauty, in the very discoveries of himself to me; the motions of my steps had never been, if the views and joy of my soul, in looking unto Jesus, never had preceded; if discoveries had not taken off uncertainties, I am sure there had been no effectual influence on my will, to bow me and incline my heart to Christ: The certainty of it in my views, made me run;
I got

I got more ground now in a thought, than I used to get under a whole set of motives and directions; for gospel-faith is no blind faith, nor round-a-bout faith; if I see my object certain, it draws my heart to him; I cannot often see his smiles, but I must be changed in the whole frame of all I see by them. The sweetness of love, in the certainty of the object, *overcomes*. He shews himself, and I come by the same grace; I see, but he always reveals his love, and displays his arm, in the light of God's countenance, before I move forward, the light shines, and takes mine eyes, before I approach the same object; and then am made at length to roll myself on Christ, to rely and cleave, to trust and repose my entire confidence in him my Lord and my God.

Here I would personate some poor soul that wants Christ's help to come to him, it may be, reader, this is thy case, thou seekest an hard heart, and a captive soul's bonds, and art straitened within thyself, and wantest a coming power, added to thy seeing eye, to come and venture all that thou art, and hast, sin and grace, upon Jesus Christ. The cause of thy bondage may be, because thou hast set up inherent grace in thy thoughts, and bowed down in thy soul unto it, and then no wonder if thou art bowed down in thy soul for it; thou hast bowed unto it, and honoured grace in thy soul, as if grace was Christ, as if frames were Christ, as if drawings, stirrings, and begun hopes were Christ; and thus, poor soul, thou hast been kept at home in self-graces, and wantest a heart to come to Christ: Poor soul! What must I say unto thee? mine errand is this, Hear what the spirit saith *unto them that mourn in Zion, Isa. lxi. 1. He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.*

Come, poor soul, mind the next discoveries; see if he doth not shew thee more in Christ than thou hast seen in meekness, patience, love or kindness, written upon any heart of flesh; see if there be not more in the twinkling of an eye, when the spirit shews thee Christ's face, than thou hast seen all thy days of Christ by reflection, looking into thy heart, and poring upon thy graces: Come then, poor soul, at the Lord's release, *Isa. xlv. 13. He shall let go my captives;* and freely give up all thy charters into the Lord Christ's hands; and see there is a more excellent way, than making and trusting so much to inherent grace; give it up all at one mighty word, at one mighty list of the spirit of Jesus, into Christ's hands, and live upon Christ Jesus alone, as it is a way to have more grace than ever; for thus hast thou been kept at home, in self-graces, instead of being kept on Christ Jesus the Lord.

" I begin to tell it you, as the spirit orderly began it in his first
 " shining in, and guiding forth mine eye upon the object, Christ:
 " Here I have stays and mighty underproppings, that bear me up,
 " while I view the same discoveries, I have an instantaneous hope
 " in mine eye, a Christ, the Christ of God in all his fitness, in all his
 " fulness, in all his freeness, set before me, my heart is raised, and
 " yet again my heart desponds! mine eye hath hope, and yet mine

" heart is treacherous ! mine eye is full of encouragement, and yet
 " my heart (I have still such a body of this death, Oh my heart) is
 " fearful ! I see the fairest face in Zion ! the chiefest of ten thou-
 " sand ! the first-born of Paradise ! Adam's elder ! Angels sovereign !
 " the eldest Glory-son ! and all the Angels of God bow before him !
 " I see him brought down, and his face marred, his body mangled
 " on the cross ! I see it for me, and yet my heart, Oh ! my heart !
 " I know no how I come to take, to hold the same fast ! It wear-
 " eth off again, and I seem to be but where I was ! I have most pure
 " discoveries, and yet my heart's unclean ! I see thy glory-word,
 " O Lord, for ever settled in Heaven, and yet my heart is wan-
 " dering ! I have better sights than ever without me, and yet my
 " heart is worse than ever within me ! It is a heart called to come,
 " and yet it cometh not ! These views have not been without the
 " voice of Christ, who hath said unto me, be of good cheer ! Here
 " is now a discerning faith, which let in my comfort, and this dis-
 " cerning faith is distinct from coming, it is seeing the Son, and
 " blessed be God, though I am often in bonds, I can see the Son
 " of God still ! "

Well, next is the coming faith to Christ, without the deeds of the
 law. Motion-faith is from myself to Christ, and more of the spirit's
 work with freedom steps ; as discerning-faith was within myself,
 by Christ's shining in by free encouragement, I would open it a lit-
 tle from some gracious experience, for I know it is a mystery, and
 I may say, with truth, I never knew what the doctrine of coming
 to Christ was, I could have no right thoughts of it, by all my
 conjectures of the practical way of performing it : coming, coming
 to Christ, did but make a sound, till the Holy Ghost inwardly
 taught it me by my own experience, and then led me on in coming,
 and in coming still to Christ oftener : Well then, it was thus with me.
 The gracious spirit of God made willing to drop all my cargo on the
 spot, all my goods and treasures laid up for many years. Laid up ?
 Aye, laid up for Heaven. But I was prevailed on to renounce and give
 up all my preparations, my qualifications, my hearing, my tears,
 my obeying, my praying and preaching, that it should be no hin-
 drance to my motion God-wards ; and as to all that appeared ma-
 terially good, in the things afore recited, grace strengthened me in
 the change, to resign them up, and trust not one of them, and so I
 stood stripped, while disburthened of all things, which I had taken
 up once in profession, to save me without Christ. That in this con-
 dition, when I came to Christ, I came light, with joy in my soul,
 and the burthen of sin dropt off upon the first distinct views. Now
 this was the opening of my way, and fitting my soul, by Christ, to
 come unto himself ; my first coming lay thus in the motions of
 my soul.

" My Lord, I have nothing, I am nothing to thee, I came with
 " nothing : I came to thee naked, because I see my cloathing pro-
 " vided ; my riches gathered, my robe and all in thy hand ready !
 " thy

thy fitness as God and man answers my condition ; as God thou
 hast taken off all discouragements, enlightened my darkness, and
 breaketh my bands in two : As man, thou waiteth to receive me,
 and yet art God that waiteth to be gracious. Thy fulness hath
 not only broken in upon mine heart, but hath broken up all my
 secret thoughts and ways before me, and hath broke off all my
 old excuses ; thy freeness in coming down, in coming down for
 me, to make the satisfaction, and that so early in thy love, be-
 fore I openly needed any, thy freeness to do it for me, when so
 many were passed by ; thy freeness to me by grace, when so many
 visible brave and illustrious souls pass their days in the spring of
 nature, run their course (through man's prosperity) in nature's sum-
 mer, and yet, like leaves, drop off in autumn, are cast into Hell
 in winter, and never saw one spiritual beam of discovery from
 the glory-sun. How free is thy grace ! 'tis to me and not another !
 thy discoveries of it to me, when I was fighting against thee in
 carnal ways : Thy freeness to loose my bonds, that now I am
 got from self and home, and come to thee the gate of mercy !
 to thee the door of life, who art proposed by the Father to be
 believed on. Mine heart is false, but thine is a true heart for me !
 I venture upon the fulness, fitness, and freeness of thy own true
 heart for me, and dare not despond, notwithstanding the treach-
 ery of my own ; thou art all life, which I set against my fre-
 quent dead heart ; thou art immortality, and I come to thee ;
 whose immortality is set against my own body of death : I come
 to thy light against my own darkness ; and yet I come with thy
 word, thy lanthorn at my feet, *Psal. cxix. 105.* and I venture to
 thee by thine own light upon me and about me ; since thou hast
 said, O Lord, unto my heart, *be not faithless but believing* ; Lord I
 have this body of death, but I come by thy grace to cleave to thy
 life ! I have the basest nature surely in the world, but I come to
 the *lamb without a spot for me* ! I come to thy beauty, and set thine
 holiness for me against all the challengers of law and conscience, in
 the room of my deformity—I come to thy holiness, to set it a-
 gainst the sin and abomination of my heart—I come with an *Æ-*
thiopian skin, lo ! here be Adam's spots upon me, and yet I come
 with thy spirit ;—I come above this condition of corrupt nature,
 because thou didst exchange conditions with me, by thy surety-
 covenant. Thou tookest my sin and yet wast never sinful, *2 Cor.*
v. 21. it could not work its stain upon thee, and therefore still,
 whether I look to saints or angels for compare, thou hast the fair-
 est face in Heaven, and I see no other way to come to God but
 by thee ;—I have a crooked heart within me, but thy spirit of
 grace and supplication, in this happy moment, hath brought me
 hither to thee ;—I come to thee against a thousand heart reproaches,
 and thine upright heart I set against my own hypocrisy ;—I
 have a fading heart in all my best complexions, the grace-
 colour of the new-nature, wears out, and washeth off in the daily

“ daily using, yet I come to thee believing, knowing that this robe in thy hand shall be openly put upon me, as thou didst; secretly put it upon my soul when I knew not what thou didst; the nearer I approach in thy light, through faith, the more I see reflectively I am cloathed, who thought myself naked;—so I am comely through thy comeliness, which thou hast put upon me;—I am one with thee in thy robe, and there is no spot in me.” And now, brethren, I do wish I could speak it to all the church of God on earth, as I speak it and have spoken it before the head of the church in Heaven;—This is the practical part of my venturing Antinomian-faith, and some call it *Enthusiasm cant madness*; yet, in this, I venture still, or I should go in faith to be as dead as the times; yea, if I had not set out in this faith in Christ, I had never been a believer.

Thus when Christ shews me the vileness of my heart, as much as in some proportion as there is in Hell (I think) yet I find comfort upon viewing the doctrine of Christ's satisfying, and am refreshed to know that he hath died for my sins, because herein he helps me to see his fulness, the fulness of his blood, and the abomination of my own sin beside; and it is a stay to my heart to behold the remedy in the Son of God provided, and set against my corruptions, which remedy I see doth vastly out-balance and weigh down the hurt that all within my heart can do me: It revives me, that though I look into this heart of mine, and see not one dram of holiness, but behold filthiness, and putrifying sores every time I search it, to know how it is with me: Yet it is a gracious relief to me that Christ the Physician is mine;—but how do I know, by the faith of seeing? Because I see him graciously stand before me: He hath visited my soul, opened my wounds, and made me know my own deformity; yet, nevertheless, when I have gospel-views of Christ, and see the human nature in his sufferings for my sins, I am relieved in searching my heart under all the views of sin in me;—I see my views refresh me, and feel a rock underneath support me. The Lord is pleased to give me a sight of all my sins, that is, all manner of corruptions in me, *Rom. vii. 21. 23.* I behold all the filthiness of abomination in my ways amassed together in my heart, and I take notice, the holier I strive to be in my duties, yet the more filthy under all these endeavours do I amazingly behold myself, in myself, yet clean in Christ; what a furtherance is this to my coming to Christ, when I come discerning what he hath done for me, though in the light I see I am sold under sin, yet I have views which present an infinite virtue-ransom too, that hath bought my pardon, and comprehends my freedom: This satisfying price, being a most certain redemption in itself, and a particular redemption to me, and though this loosens my chains, yet it doth not entirely break off my bonds; this is the work of farther grace, and this is the view that gives me the gracious hopes, the sweet encouragements of my safest interest: In these views I see if I had a thousand times ten thousand

thousand times more sin, if it had been possible than I have, yet this ransom-blood of Christ would cleanse me from all sin: All my filthiness therefore, whatever it be inherently, is notwithstanding in that fundamental cleansing, once for all mystically cleansed away in the bottom-relation I mystically stand in to Christ, even while sin continues in me inherently, and I am now by virtue of this radical cleansing compleat and without spot in him. Aye, says some, here is presumption with a witness; aye, says I, so there is, as he must apprehend it, and never do I expect to come to Heaven without abundance of that to carry me on thither, which some call presumption: Well, to reconcile and clear it more, I look to the truth revealed in the written word, and there I find he died and made satisfaction point-blank for such a soul, for such a sinner as I, who stood off and had no heart to come. This encourages me now to take up this ransom-blood as mine. I find by the strength of the quickening arm, that will work when the Lord pleaseth, that he will work more strength and grace in me when he sees it meet; this lot falls to me, let it fall how it will to another, and, by all tokens in my object, it must be satisfaction made for me. For the satisfaction of Christ is not to make, through the drawing of the spirit, and the coming of the soul are yet to do; upon this principle I am helped to more approaches of my soul to Christ, spiritually in a day, than I was wont to find in the other conditional divinity in seven years. It may be, Reader, thou canst not lay hold of comfort, because thou art not come to Christ for comfort, inwhom that comfort is founded, from whom it flows, by whom it is conveyed; what then, soul, through grace thou seest him, and in him thou seest that thy very first comfort is darted as a sun-beam of Heaven into the inner chamber of thy heart. Thy faith is but an embryo, the shape of it yet is not all perfected in the womb of thy mind, as a faith to reach to all the lively proportions of it, for the motion act of faith is a more ripening act than the sight of faith; to see and believe is the first act, but to come and believe is a farther act. For I have plainly seen the eyeing-act of faith, distinct from the venturing-act of faith, and that the former is sometimes a long while in the soul before the latter; that is, my brazen serpent act of faith, eyeing my object for ease and remedy, as I am sick and stung: But my golden-sceptre-faith is approaching the object, as I am made strong by God the Spirit, being married to the same Lord who holds his grace forth of bestowing what I ask.

C H A P. X.

To prove by a Variety of Scripture Arguments, that the Soul cannot be too filthy to go to Christ for Salvation.

MR. Hunt observes, page 40, in his *Sharon's Rose*, *thou mayest be, says he, too filthy to go to Christ by faith in the state thou art now in.* If this be not novel Divinity, to the Scriptures, I know not what is, which I shall endeavour to make appear by the following arguments:

Argument 1st. He that can't be too guilty in his person to go to Christ by faith, can't be too filthy in his nature to go by faith to him; for guilt and pollution go in couples: This evidently appears in the type of the two goats, *Lev. xvi.* provided both for the guilt and uncleanness of the people too; for after the goat of the sin-offering for the people, upon which the Lord's lot fell, was offered up for a sin-offering, ver. 9, 15. and atonement made with it, ver. 16. because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, it is expressly said at ver. 21. *Aaron was to lay both his hands upon the head of the scape-goat, or live-goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the scape-goat.* What! what was this! but coming with the guilt and filth of sin, both included in that phrase, *their sins*; and separately called *iniquities* and *uncleanness*? Who was it a coming to in the mystery and intent of that type, but Christ? Atonement was to be made for their uncleanness, and their transgressions, in all their sins; both being coupled and laid together in that provisional sacrifice, looking towards Jesus. So that as guiltiness and filthiness in sin go together, and ample provision is made in bestowing Christ against both uncleanness and transgression; and then go to Christ fiducially and confessedly, putting him in remembrance under faith, viewing him, that both these have been laid upon him, and if I cannot act thus in respect of filth of sin, I cannot act thus neither in respect of guilt of sin, for we see how they go together.

Argument 2d. All sin is an abomination in the sight of God, guilt of sin, or filth of sin; and is there any child of God in the world can go to Christ without sin in his relation to Adam? So that if the soul goes at all, it goes with its abominations to the Son of God, *manifested to take away our sins*, 1 *John* iii. 5. How doth a man go to the water, but dirty, whether he hath much or little dirt upon him, it is dirt,

dirt, and to the water he goes with that defilement; and is it not too with all the pollutions he hath? And is it not dirt a man carries to the basin with confidence the water will fetch it out? And why not spiritually go to Christ in the fountain of his blood, with our great and many abominations? Why not with all our filth, when his death is *set open as a fountain for sin and uncleanness?* *Zech. xiii. 1.*

Argument 3d. None was ever forbid to come to Christ because of filthiness, see *John vi. 37.* *He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.* But what if he comes in his filth? Well, if he does, the text excludes none that so comes to Christ; him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out: If in no wise, why then it must be in this case, he will not, though a man come unto him in the filth of sin. Oh! I am unclean, I am filthy, how shall I come to him of pure eyes? Yet, nevertheless, if the Holy Ghost gives him faith to come with all his filth of sin sticking in his conscience, Christ will not cast him out.

Argument 4th. None are shut up by impotency after faith is given them, though uncleanness be discovered, 'tis not the matter of sin or uncleanness that shuts them up, it is the want of faith and strength, not the want of holiness; I am able to come polluted, but not in a state of unregeneracy. So that if the Lord gives me faith to come to Christ with filth of sin, compassed with pollutions, I go to Christ with these pollutions laid open, be not afraid, only believe is the word; and when Christ sets this word home upon the heart, it breaks thro' all difficulties and discouragements that ariseth from flesh and blood; for I can see an holiness in Christ, that is engaged to outdo all my pollutions; therefore a soul may always go to Christ, by faith, when the most sensible defilement is felt; faith hath evermore welcome, the spirit introduces it to a free access notwithstanding all defilements. Soul, thy faith is thy life, if the Holy Ghost, as the comforter from the Glory-man, be at the bottom of it: Thou mayest go, and must go with all my defilements to Christ, though they are never so many filthy streams, between Christ and thy awakened conscience, as Christ is the cleansing means. Besides, suppose he secretly sanctify thee (as he certainly doth before thou comest) but discovers it not, thou must go nevertheless without any inherent holiness; it may be often weak and feeble goings, thy hands trembling with a poor shaking palsy-faith, and thy heart faint within thee, yet he hath promised to receive thee; the blood of Christ hath the same cleansing virtue in it, the first moment of application, as after the most prolonged delays of trying I cannot tell how many experiments, as fasting, praying, hearing, almsgiving, reading, &c. Well, the man thinks to get some qualifications to go to Christ; well, he thinks, all this is brave; but at last, if ever a man be clean it must be by the blood of Christ; and if the spirit applies that blood; if a man sets out ever so unclean in his own eyes, that blood cleanseth him as effectually the first moment it toucheth his heart, as though he tarried for all the above train of qualifications; therefore, soul, mind the reverse, thou canst not be too filthy to go to Christ, by faith in the state and condition thou art in.

Argu-

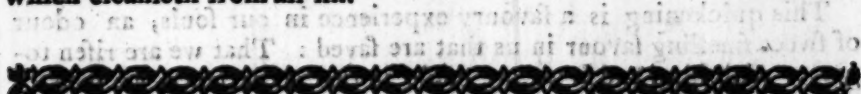
Argument 5th. For a being too filthy to come to Christ is contrary to the promises of the gospel ; for, says God, *Exek. xxxvi. 25. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean : From all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you.* Again, if any thing entangles the soul, and the poor heart doubts, saying, surely I am not clean ; surely I am not clean. Why, then he will make new experiments of his grace, such as his soul hath not been used to heretofore, new wonders, and open all the mafs, treasures, and ocean of the blood of Christ at once, and that for sin, and for this very sin, uncleanness, which troubles thee, *Zeck. xiii. 1. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.* Doth not this set forth souls going to Christ with all their filthiness ? If it was not to wash away filthiness, why was the fountain set forth for sin and uncleanness ? If the heart by faith lays hold of Christ's blood in the time of impurity, then the soul must come impure and filthy. On the other hand, if the soul be first pure, then his faith cannot be purifying faith, nor the blood of Christ cleansing blood to his soul.

Argument 6th. The woman taken in adultery, in the very act, was defiled with the filth of sin, but this woman, so taken and brought to Christ, was not condemned by Christ when set before him, but was dismissed with a non-condemnation, with a gracious caution, *go, and sin no more* : Likewise, David's filthiness, in the matter of Bethsheba, was a grievous pollution, and yet under that contamination he was not too filthy in the case and condition of his soul (in all those aggravations) to come to Christ by faith : This is a clear argument, that pollution ought to be no obstacle. How unclean was David ? What moral filthiness had he contracted ? and, yet to whom did he repair but to Christ ? and what was it in Christ but his blood, that was a full and present remedy, for his filthiness and blood-guiltiness besides ? which was typically pointed out, by his being *purged with hyssop, Psal. li. 7.*

The case of Matthew is also pertinent to my purpose, *Matt. ix. 9. And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom, and he saith unto him, follow me. And he arose and followed him.* Could this man be clean ? Was he a holy man ? No, rather he had abundance of filth when Christ called him : Was he not a publican, *Matt. xiii. 3.* an officer that gathered the Roman Tax ? and how unclean were such ? Publicans and harlots, publicans and sinners make one list, *Matt. xxi. 32.* compared with *Matt. ix. 10.* yet he was not too filthy in the pickle he was in when Christ called him ; and he arose and followed him.

Argument 7th. The stung Israelites, did in their pollutions look towards the brazen serpent for a cure of their poison, because they were too weak and wounded to move out of the place where the fiery serpents had bit them, and so could not but look to the brazen serpent upon the pole : Accordingly, it proves the lawfulness of souls coming to Christ in all their defilements, since looking and coming

coming is both to the same end. And is looking by faith to the Saviour's blood to be obstructed by a caveat of being too filthy, when Christ died for blasphemers, 1 Tim. i. 13. for persecutors, for chief sinners, ver. 15. for idolaters, fornicators, and adulterers, for thieves, drunkards, and extortioners, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. yea, for murderers, Luke xxiii. 34. not to save them in this state; no, his cleansing blood was shed to save them from the filth of it, from the guilt and condemnation of it, therefore a soul cannot be too guilty or filthy to go to Christ for salvation; because he goes to Christ to be saved from the filth of sin, as much as the curse due to sin: He hates the pollutions of his heart as much as he fears the wrath that hangs over his guilty head, as his desires are as much to be saved from the contaminating nature of sin, as from the condemnation of it, therefore he goes to Christ to have his mind purified by faith in his blood, being encouraged by those words in Heb. vii. 25. *Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them:* And, indeed, we find that cleansing grace is as precious and desirable to the convicted sinner as pardoning blood: So if Mr. Hunt meant by being too filthy, a soul's desire to be saved in the filth of sin, he shews himself a stranger to divine experience: Or if he meant too filthy for Christ to save, he shews his ignorance of the redeeming efficacy of the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin.



C H A P. VIII.

A brief Explanation of Canticles ii. 1. I am the Rose of Sharon.

THIS metaphor sets forth some peculiar transcendent excellencies in the Lord Jesus; First, His transcendent beauty;—Second, His transcendent fragrantcy;—Third, His transcendent blessings; these are all shadowed forth by this transcendent Rose of Sharon.

First, The Rose of Sharon was a more beautiful rose than the common-roses of the world, and therefore fitter to shadow forth the transcendent beauty of Christ, above all mankind, who is the *chiefest among ten thousand*. Oh! the transcendent beauty of the Man risen from the dead, in personal union with God, both natures in one person, the ruddy beauty, by whom Sharon's rose was made with a peculiar excellency above all other roses, to shadow forth his peculiar

excellencies, *who is fairer than the children of men*; the liveliness of his face in Heaven, his glory-complexion at the right hand of God, as he is the church's bridegroom, this Rose of Sharon shadowed forth his resurrection, beauty and exaltation.

Second, The Rose of Sharon had also a transcendent fragrancy, beyond the fragrancy and sweetness of other common roses; there was such an excellency of scent and sweetness in Sharon's fields, from this excelling production of those kind of roses, as perhaps there was not such another place to be found in the whole world.

So the sweetness of Jesus Christ, at the right of God, to all that have spiritual senses exercised to discern between good and evil, i. e. experience of that kind to take in the favour of his grace from the right hand of God. Oh! these experienced ones find such a transcendent fragrancy in the enjoyment of Christ's person and love, made known to their faith by the holy spirit to their souls, that there is not the like sweetness and satisfactory enjoyment to be found among all the sensual objects of the world; Oh! the virtue and influence of the love of Christ risen, it prevails and superabounds to draw off the soul from all bewitching fragrances, the pleasures and enticing sweetness of this world. Oh! none can imagine the transcendent sweetness of Christ, except such professors as have found him in their souls.

This quickening is a savoury experience in our souls, an odour of sweet smelling favour in us that are saved: That we are risen together with him, and so we are made in that experience, as sweetly acted by the Holy Ghost, to seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Oh! then it is as Saints indeed that we have our right smell of this rose, but a dead faith cannot smell his fragrancy.

Third, The Rose of Sharon had a transcendent blessing above all roses in the world; all Canaan was a covenant-land, and blessed more evidently than other countries, particularly Sharon was a special place for roses of the best production, and was eminently blessed with that kind:—Sharon was a place famous for feeding flocks and herds, 1 Chron. xxvii. 29, and the evangelical prophet, with his eye upon the gospel, that foretold some spiritual and mystical application of this, in a way of grace by Jesus Christ to the church of God, Isa. lxxv. 10. *And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks for my people that have sought me.*

Thus; as in Sharon literally, men kept their flocks of sheep; so Sharon's neighbouring roses were diffused sweetly in their balmy odours among the sheep walks; David, the shepherd, and therein a regal type of Christ, had kept his Father's flock in Judah; and so, the Sharon rose was by the Lord Christ, the rosy shepherd that kept his Father's little flock, his church, the assemblies of his saints, who worship him in the beauty of holiness; for these have Christ's own gos-

pel pastures to feed in, where all the fragrant virtue and influence of his presence comes, as the roses did among the flocks of Sharon. He is, by the virtue of his fragrantcy, through the holy spirit, the communion-rose of saints, with peculiar sweetness and delight between himself and his church, as she enjoys him as the Rose of Sharon. It is therefore Christ set forth in his exalted state, and not in his crucified state, that is here meant in the text. Now, if we take him in all his glory in Heaven, and you see him in all that full glory, even as he stood in the love of the Father from everlasting, it is in this glory of his the saints shall have communion with him, but here darkly and imperfectly, till that which is in part is done away, then that which is perfect shall come, and then shall we know that Christ is the glory-kingdom-rose in the midst of the paradise of God, to be enjoyed in the transcendent beauty sweetness of his glory-bloom, in the everlasting Eden above, as his glory reigns in Heaven; yet he shall have in his church a thousand years glorious open bloom on earth, from the amazing prospects of his throne, and the whole earth shall be lightened with his glory, Amen, even so come Lord Jesus Christ,

F I N I S.



